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The ARMENIAN REVIEW

SUMMER, 1953

SPECIAL

**WHAT MAY BE EXPECTED
OF STALIN'S SUCCESSORS**

by
Reuben Darbinian

also

Avetis Aharonian

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H. Kurdian

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Prof. Mardiros Ananikian

Jirair Missakian

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“Armenian Life Abroad”

Poetry, Reviews, Stories, Articles



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WHAT MAY BE EXPECTED OF STALIN'S SUCCESSORS

REUBEN DARBINIAN



How does the Present Situation Differ From the One Which Prevailed Immediately After Lenin's Death

In the opinion of some people the situation which has come about upon the death of Stalin, at least in so far as it concerns the question of power, is very similar to the one which prevailed upon Lenin's death. This opinion is wholly untenable.

First of all, when Lenin died the Communist Party still was a living and functioning organism as a political party. Both the leaders and the members were free in their party meetings to express opinions, either individually or collectively, to initiate programs, to discuss and to debate fearlessly, to wage ideological and factional controversies and fights, and to map out the party's internal and external policies without any restriction or intimidation. Today the Communist Party has ceased to be a real political party in the Soviet

Union, having been converted by Stalin into a part of the state bureaucratic machine whose members no longer control or govern the organization through the medium of free expression but who are the servile executors of commands which come from the above under severest penalty should they deviate in the slightest from the line which is mapped out by their masters. A political party reduced to such impotence naturally cannot play the leading role as it could in the days of Lenin and for a certain period after his death.

Second: After Lenin's death the supreme power of the USSR was wielded by the party; today, after Stalin's death, that power has been concentrated in a small group of individuals who were Stalin's close associates during the period of his personal dictatorship.

Third: At the time of Lenin's death Communist party leaders were known as

individuals for their peculiarities, their pronounced differences in ideology, policy, and methods of pursuit, whereas after Stalin's death the men who have divided the power among themselves are practically unknown men in this respect. For the most part of their active service having been hitched to Stalin's wagon, these men never had an opportunity to display their true individuality, their character, their personal opinions and tendencies, their sympathies and predilections. It is only now when the fear of Stalin has been removed that they have a chance to bring to the fore their hitherto hidden and suppressed personalities. But even this is still limited to a certain extent by the shacklings of their mutual distrust and the compulsion of mutual intrigue. Only when and if one of them attains to the unrivaled prestige and rank of Stalin as the sole master of the land shall his successor boldly come forth in the full manifestation of his personality.

It is for these reasons that it is very difficult just now, if not impossible, to make any definite predictions in regard to the personalities of Stalin's successors which are based on various partial sign posts, casual indications, and the pronouncements of random, untrustworthy and ill-informed prognosticators.

We must always bear in mind when Stalin was still alive if some of his associates had differences of opinions, if they had individual convictions and views on ideology or policy, that such individuals never made free affirmation of such differences. Without doubt, what they said or did in those days, they did so at Stalin's dictate or in their effort to please him, or their eagerness to anticipate his wishes. The peremptory changes enacted immediately after Stalin's death, leave no doubt that his successors were absolutely impotent when Stalin was alive to deviate in the slightest from his pronounced will or to prevail upon

him to introduce any changes in the structure of the party, the government, or in matters of policy.

The various statements expressive of personal inclinations or tendencies ascribed to Malenkov, Zhdanov, or Stalin's other associates, therefore, must be regarded as pure speculation. Such statements might have had a basis of validity had they come from close acquaintances of Malenkov or his co-dictators who made a successful getaway from the Iron Curtain, but as far as we know none of Stalin's intimate associates has either betrayed the Soviet cause or has made his escape abroad. Such information, therefore, comes from individuals who in all probability never saw the faces of the men of whom they speak and their gratis opinions are worth no more than common coffee house gossip.

The Uncertainty of the Situation And the Meaning of the Concessions

There is no doubt that Stalin's death will initiate a number of significant changes in the Soviet Union. It will also have a perceptible effect upon the world situation. Yet we cannot expect that such changes will take place in a short time. The reasons for this are many.

First of all, the power of Stalin's successors is not as secure as was the case with Stalin. As was to be expected, Stalin's death has produced a general uncertainty. The unprecedentedly ruthless dictator's paralyzing terror having been removed, the people are showing signs of unrest, otherwise Stalin's successors would not have been so expeditious in taking a number of steps which are calculated to quiet the masses.

There is, for example, an extraordinary emphasis on peace talks, and an unusual willingness to promote friendly relations with the outside world. The Soviet leaders

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seem eager to make slight concessions in Europe and Asia which carry at least an illusion of pacifism. They have agreed to yield to the United Nations in the matter of war prisoners, to some extent, they have shown a willingness to negotiate with the West on the question of clearing the airplanes over Germany. They have given amnesty to approximately two million minor offenders. They have reduced the price of consumer goods by ten to fifteen percent. And generally speaking they have shown a willingness to ease the prevalent world tension.

There is also the matter of mutual fear which compels Stalin's successors to enter into a rivalry among themselves, willingly or unwillingly, either for the power or their personal safety. Molotov, for example, cannot be reconciled with the fact that it is Malenkov who is Premier and not he, an older associate of Stalin, a one-time Premier, and therefore Stalin's logical heir. Beria who controls the state security, the police, the entire Chekist network and the so-called 'special corps,' can hardly be expected to be content with a secondary role. Krushchev who controls the entire party machine cannot be without his secret aspirations to occupy Malenkov's place especially as he reviews Stalin's example after Lenin's death. The case of Bulganin with his full command of the Red Army and supported by two of the most famous and popular Red generals is another contributory cause of the general uncertainty. On the other hand Malenkov, who unlike Stalin, commands neither the party machine, the police, the Cheka, nor the army, but only the state bureaucracy, naturally fears his rivals and is compelled to move with caution, constantly feeling the ground under his feet.

There is unrest and uncertainty also in the Soviet satellites which, having been disengaged from Stalin's spell, are bound

to become more bold and more self-assertive. There is more danger than the satellites will want to travel along the road of Tito's Yugoslavia.

Lastly, Stalin's successors cannot help but worry about the future course of the Communists of the free world. Now that they are temporarily rid of the perpetual terror of constant purges which prevailed under Stalin's regime, they undoubtedly will be an additional source of headache to the new masters.

All these obstacles, internal and external, will not of course prevent Stalin's successors from pursuing their basic aims. Those slight concessions, imaginary or real, which hitherto they have been forced to make and which in all probability they will continue to make in the immediate future, are not calculated as a substantial deviation from those fundamental policies and aims.

These are and will continue to be mere changes in *modus operandi* but never a deviation from the primary goal. The realities of life have their inexorable logic. The Soviet dictatorship with its grotesque order created by Lenin and Stalin has made slaves of its heirs who, even if they wanted to, shall never be able to transform it radically without committing suicide, whereas suicide is alien to any dictatorship, and moreso, to totalitarian dictatorships.

Group Dictatorship Replaces Personal Power

The events unfolded in the wake of Stalin's sudden demise have no doubt shed a clearer, if not an entirely new light on the proceedings of the last Communist Party Congress in Moscow. This is equally true of the world situation which immediately preceded the Congress.

The first indubitable revelation was the fact that Stalin made no provision for the succession of his power, either one indi-

vidual or a group of individuals. Apparently his imminent death was far from his thoughts otherwise he would not have made those radical changes in party and governmental structures which his successors were forced to remove scarcely twenty-four hours after his death. These changes are so amazingly striking that some people have seriously doubted if Stalin was not killed by his own trusted associates.

The second revelation was the indisputability of Stalin's personal authority, his absolute, unobjectionable and irresistible rule even over his closest and most trusted associates to such an extent that the latter, as late as the last six months of his life, were unable to make the slightest influence upon him in regard to party or governmental dispensations although they were being enacted through a Communist Congress. Were this not the case, Stalin's associates would have accomplished before his death what they carried out immediately after his death.

Today, after Stalin's death, as we contemplate once again the events of those last few months, and try to understand why, after a lapse of thirteen years, so suddenly he convened the last party congress, we cannot avoid the conclusion that Stalin, in taking this step, not only was not thinking of the succession but, on the contrary, he wanted still further to strengthen his personal dictatorship, and commensurately to weaken the authority of his potential heirs. It is very plain now that the last congress was not intended for enacting Stalin's last behest but to resolve three fundamental problems.

First of all, Stalin wanted further to consolidate his personal power by abolishing the Politburo whose old members apparently had become less reliable and even dangerous in his eyes, and instead to create a numerically larger supreme body in order to diffuse the individual power of the

old members of the Politburo. Besides, through a new party edict he wanted to intensify the vigilance over party members and to convert the party into a new sort of secret police. Finally, he tried to decimate the ministries by increasing their number to approximately sixty, and thus to render it into less of a menace to his personal authority.

Stalin's second aim in convoking the Congress was to initiate certain changes in his foreign and domestic policies, further to concentrate the economy of the country under his personal control preparatory to a new war, and at the same time to lull the people into sleep through the initiation of new "peace" theories and a new propaganda campaign.

As a third objective Stalin wanted further to consolidate his personal control over the Communists of the free world. That was the reason why he addressed the only speech he delivered in the Congress to these people. He had invited these Communists from 44 countries to Moscow in order to cement the personal tie and to instruct them in regard to their future course.

It must be noted, however, that even if Stalin had wanted to make definite arrangements in regard to the succession, he could not have failed to know that events would take an entirely different course after his death. The living example of Lenin was still before him. Unlike himself, having foreseen his death, Lenin specifically had instructed in his will to keep Stalin away from the power. But while Lenin was still in his death bed Stalin already had succeeded in taking effective measures to become his heir.

It is quite true that it took Stalin quite some time until he liquidated his rivals but he did so, not in accordance with, but in contravention of Lenin's will. Therefore it makes no great difference whether

or not Stalin had made any arrangements for the succession. The important thing is the general situation which has been created after his death. Whether in conformity or contrary to his will.

What is this peculiar situation.

Judging from all indications it may confidently be stated that although Malenkov nominally is the central figure in the USSR, and as Prime Minister he holds Stalin's place, actually, however, he is far from commanding the latter's power, authority, and absolute rule.

Even if Malenkov has been designated by Stalin as his successor as some are wont to believe, he by no means could possess all of a sudden Stalin's prestige and power. It must not be overlooked that only after a long and strenuous struggle with Lenin's old guard Stalin succeeded in becoming the undisputed master of the Soviet Union.

The crying fact of today is that Malenkov, as the head of the government, is accompanied with Stalin's old guard all of whom are his rivals while some, as older and more influential associates of Stalin, have or may have a stronger claim to his throne. Consequently, as long as Stalin's old guard in the persons of his old Politburo still exists, it is difficult for Malenkov to become the sole dictator of the entire Soviet Union. Malenkov is obliged to share his power with the members of that old guard, to act collectively, and to pass important decisions collectively with them.

The changes which were brought about after Stalin's death confirm this fact. Factually, Stalin's last Politburo has been restored although the new name of Presidium enacted by the Thirteenth Congress is retained. The augmented number of the Congress Presidium has been reduced from 25 to 10, all members of the old Politburo with the exception of two. The new Presidium has taken over Stalin's power and has divided the important roles

among itself in a manner calculated to prevent the concentration of power in any single individual to the point of becoming a menace to the others as was the case of Stalin. Malenkov is merely Prime Minister while his associates control the party machine, the police, the special Security Corps, and the regular army.

Furthermore, the ministries which had been broken up by Stalin with a view to strengthening his personal dictatorship have now been revamped and reunited. Thus, as many as two to five ministries have been consolidated in one under the control of a single member of the Politburo to render it more efficient as well as to keep a closer check upon them.

Even the Ministry of Interior which in the later stages of Stalin's rule had been divided into two for the safety of his dictatorship has now been reunited into one under the notorious Beria.

Another significant fact is the divesting of Premier Malenkov from his function of General Secretary of the Communist Party, an important instrument through which Stalin succeeded in eliminating his rivals and to centralize the power in himself immediately after Lenin's death. It is a noteworthy fact that immediately after Stalin's death, when his successors divided the power among themselves, they made no specific statement in regard to this highly influential post, leaving the impression that the role was reserved for Malenkov as was the case with Stalin. But great was the surprise when weeks later it was officially announced that the post had been given to Krushchev, an influential member of the old Politburo.

All these facts go to prove that, unlike Stalin, Malenkov's power is not unlimited but is exceedingly restricted, and that, instead of a one man's rule, there has come into existence the rule of a *group* dictatorship.

In this respect the Pravda editorial of April 16 which is a categorical condemnation of personal dictatorship is highly significant:

"However experienced an executive may be, whatever knowledge and abilities he possesses, he will not succeed in replacing the initiative and experience of an entire collective. Leaders cannot take a critical statement aimed at them as a personal offense. They must know how to meet criticism courageously, to manifest readiness to subordinate their will to the will of the collective. The role of collective leadership consists in correcting and criticizing one another. Where there exists an intolerable situation of obsequiousness in which there is no place for businesslike critical discussion of questions and critical observations aimed at leading comrades are not made, there exists as a rule serious shortcomings in work."

These lines obviously are directed against personal dictatorships of Stalin's type, clearly proving that personal dictatorship in the Kremlin has been replaced by a *group* dictatorship in which the new rulers are afraid of each other and are trying to restore to a certain extent the practice of free exchange of opinions in the Communist Party, in order to secure the collective character of their power and to prevent the resurgence of a new personal dictatorship of Stalin's type.

Two Alternatives

Ever since the days when Stalin liquidated most of Lenin's associates, abolished the freedom of speech and ballot in the Communist Party, subjected the Communists to a regime of unprecedented terror, stripped the party of all idealistic content and converted it into an aggregation of abject and slavish stooges, the supreme goal of the Soviet dictator and his servile "party" became not the victory of the Com-

munist, but the preservation, the consolidation and the extension of the Soviet regime both inside the USSR and abroad. In other words, Communism became only a *means* of attaining that end.

And now Stalin's successors neither want nor can abandon this fundamental aim of self perpetuation. They are hog-tied. They do not want to, and cannot, because, having been trained in Stalin's immoral, atheistic and cynical school, they are forced to use Communism as a means of retaining and perpetuating their power. They are forced to pursue this policy because they well know that should they deviate in the slightest, should they make substantial concessions to real democracy, freedom and peace, not only they will be unable to retain their power but their precious skin as well.

Besides, if on the one hand Stalin's successors, themselves atheists, opportunists, and selfish adventurers who tenaciously cling to their power have managed to rally a motley of followers of the same ilk in the Soviet Union, there is on the other hand an equally imposing multitude of fanatical believers who will not readily submit should their leaders openly betray the Communist cause.

Under the present circumstances, therefore, Stalin's successors are not inclined, nor are they in a position to make a radical deviation from the policies drawn by Stalin and approved only a short time ago by the Communist Party Congress. And this situation assuredly will continue as long as Stalin's successors are at rivalry with one another. None of the principal competitors will hazard a defection from the orthodox policy for fear such defection may be used by his rivals as a weapon to eliminate him from the race.

Of one thing we may be certain. Even if one of Stalin's successors should succeed in eliminating his rivals and should

become sole dictator of the Soviet Union, he again would not abandon the Communist ideology even if that ideology were completely transfigured to the point of becoming unrecognizable. There can be no doubt that the principal actors of the mute rivalry meticulously will observe the strictures of the Communist credo. Moreover they will make use of that credo to justify deeds which are contrary to its spirit. And this struggle can have only two outcomes.

The first of these two possible upshots is the successful emergence of a single dictator as was the case with Stalin. One of the rivals may succeed in eliminating his competitors and establishing himself as the sole dictator, with power of life and death over all his subjects, including the Communists. The other possibility is a violent conflict. In the absence of a decisive result, the mute struggle may break out into the open and may even develop into a sort of civil war as it happened several times in the old Roman Empire when several dictators fought it out among themselves until a sole dictator emerged.

Which of these two fatal outcomes the course of events in the Soviet Union will take no one can predict at present. One thing, however, seems inevitable. The small group of dictators who have inherited Stalin's power shall not be able to cooperate harmoniously for long, and sooner or later there will be a dog fight as it happened in the aftermath of Lenin.

It should also not be overlooked that a group dictatorship carries in itself the germs of its own disintegration as history has proven by countless examples. Simultaneously reigning dictators have always fought among themselves until they devoured one another. Such a contingency seems all the more inevitable now in view of the fact that Lenin's successors, at the initial stages, had no fear of one another, whereas Stalin's successors even lack this

comfort. Being Stalin's most clever and most successful pupils, each of them realizes that if he should lose the contest he will lose his head in the bargain, and that, unless he destroys his competitors, the latter will destroy him.

The New Game of the Sham Peace

It is difficult, if not impossible, to expect the solemn entry of a man who combines in himself all the sinister moral qualities and the political genius of Stalin—qualities with which he shattered all the obstacles in his path and became history's most absolute, most ruthless and most notorious despot.

His successors, who have learned much from him, perhaps could continue his work if they could rule harmoniously. But it has never been seen in the history of mankind and it is a psychological impossibility that a collective tyranny should last long. Therefore, the peculiar situation in the Soviet Union which has come into existence since the death of Stalin can never be lasting. Sooner or later this uncertainty will come to an end as a result of the mute struggle among the aspirants for the sole absolute power. The internal party unrest, the popular discontent against the regime, and the pressure from the free world will no doubt accelerate the outcome of that struggle, one way or another.

Judging from all outward signs the successors of Stalin realize the instability of their position and that is why they try feverishly to reassure their enslaved peoples as well as the outside world with their trivial concessions both on the home front and in the cold war. It would be a fatal mistake, however, should the free nations allow themselves to be tricked by similar concessions in the mistaken belief that Stalin's successors are launched on an entirely new policy, utterly different from the policy of Stalin. There can be no doubt

that they neither want to, nor possibly can resign from the fundamental aggressive aims which Stalin pursued. They neither want, nor can lift the Iron Curtain, make an end of the cold war, or abandon their subversive tactics in free countries. They cannot agree with, or cooperate with the free nations, with honesty and sincerity, in the interest of disarmament or a lasting peace. And lastly, they neither want to, nor can relinquish their principal aim of world conquest, because they realize that, as long as a free world exists, they can never feel secure in their slave empire.

Bearing all this in mind, and especially after the bitter experience of the past seven years, it would be the height of naivete seriously to accept the "peace offensive" which Stalin's successors have inaugurated in the form of slight concessions and to believe that they really want peace. They are as far from a desire to establish a real peace as was Stalin. By lending fresh impetus to the phony peace offensive practiced by Stalin himself, first of all, they want to gain time to consolidate their shaky power, and secondly, they make a new try to mislead the free world and to lull them to sleep. They do this, on the one hand to promote confusion and lassitude in the West, to frustrate the effort to arm Germany and Japan, to debilitate the effort for the strengthening of the united anti-Communist front, to bring to a standstill, or at least to weaken the West's measures for self defense, to whittle down the NATO's resistance potential, to try new aggressions under the cover of their new "peace offensive," and on the other hand to enable themselves to acquire by speciously peaceful and cooperative means where Stalin failed through his provocative and inflexible methods.

For example, it is obvious that Stalin's successors are exceedingly disturbed over Eisenhower's Far Eastern policy, includ-

ing his military and political measures which are calculated to stop expansionist plans of Communist China. The new policy to support the forces of South Korea, Indo China, and especially Chiang-Kai-Sheck, to train them, to drill them, to arm them with modern weapons, all those efforts cannot fail to impress the Communist leaders, and especially the Chinese Communists whose very power is at stake.

Their promises for the exchange of prisoners, their unexpected eagerness for a Korean armistice, and generally speaking their conciliatory attitude on all measures which affect the peace, all these betray a degree of unease on the part of Stalin's successors and their Chinese allies which, no less than the changed situation since Stalin's death, seem to indicate that they are the result of President Eisenhower's new policy in the Far East.

This seems all the more evident from Molotov's sympathetic statement in regard to the question of prisoner exchange and the Korean armistice in which, significantly enough, the Soviet Foreign Minister tries to take advantage of the occasion by suggesting the admission of Communist China and Northern Korea into the family of the United Nations. He does this, of course, hoping to utilize these two added votes to neutralize the government of Chiang-Kai-Sheck, to deprive it of the American military and economic support, to prevent American aid to Indo-China, and to nullify Eisenhower's entire Far Eastern program.

Stalin's successors together with Chinese leaders, it seems, have come to the conclusion that under the present circumstances should they continue their policy of conquest by armed force, they shall never achieve their aim without precipitating a world war, a contingency which they apparently abhor. In all probability they think that if, at least for the time being, they

continue their conciliatory policy, sign an armistice in Korea and even in Indo-China, they will have a more favorable opportunity all the more easily to infiltrate and to conquer by political or revolutionary means both Korea and Indo China, and also to ensure Communist China against the possibility of an anti-Communist revolution or a new civil war.

This is the reason why, even if an armistice is concluded in Korea and the civil war in Indo-China comes to an end, there will be no assurance of a real peace in the Far East, nor a guarantee that the Communists will not make new attempts to conquer the whole of Korea and Indo-China by internal revolution or political infiltration, to pave the way for the conquest of Asia.

The Trends of the Soviet Domestic Policy

If the slight concession to *foreign* policy released by Stalin's successors are illusory, detracting nothing from the basic Soviet aims, the case is no different in regard to Soviet *domestic* policy. The concessions in this area too (the release of prisoners sentenced to less than five years, the release of the physicians accused of terroristic operations on their patients, the lowering of the price of consumers goods 10-15 percent and the rehabilitation of some Communists in Georgia), will make no essential change in the people's condition.

These concessions, as well as the conciliatory statements for the peace emanating from the new rulers, are no valid guarantee of the desired peace. They do not mean that the Iron Curtain will be lifted or the terroristic regime will be abolished. On the contrary we must be prepared for a long wait as Stalin's successors continue to carry out the provisions of Stalin's 19th Congress, which means

they will further strengthen Stalin's tyranny, depriving the people even of those limited rights which they have been enjoying in the various branches of domestic economy and culture.

For example, there is no reason to believe that the new rulers will allay the condition of the peasantry. According to Stalin's new program endorsed by the recent Communist Congress which may be regarded as his legacy, the government must take over the peasant's entire produce, completely dispossessing him and making him dependent on the whim of the government. The object of this policy is to insure the standing mobilization of Soviet agriculture and industry for the demands of a new world war.

According to latest information the Soviet military budget for the current year has reached the sum of 113 billion rubles, 5 billion rubles more than the 1942 budget. This means, in these "peace" days the Soviet government expends on military preparations 5 billion rubles more than it expended in the last war when she was fighting against Hitler's might. The same kind of increase of military expenditures we see in the satellite countries. In the light of these staggering facts, of what worth are trivial concessions and grandiloquent assurances in the name of peace? Generally, it must be taken for granted that the Soviet government, whether under Stalin or under his successors, has had but one supreme concern, namely, the preservation of its power. To this end it proceeds inflexibly in two directions: to stop at nothing in consolidating its tyrannical regime, and to continue its exploitation of the subject peoples in preparation for a new war against the free world.

Stalin's successors assuredly will be forced also to follow Stalin's national policy which is no less important than his economic and military programs. Whether or not they

want it, they will do this in order to preserve the creation of Lenin and Stalin whom they assisted, namely, the Soviet totalitarianism. They will do essentially what Lenin and Stalin did.

It is true that the Soviet government passed through several phases by the time it reached its present nationalities policy. At the beginning of the Soviet regime, as known, the various non-Russian nationalities of the Soviet Union enjoyed certain tangible freedoms, such as the use of their language in government institutions as well as limited scope of cultural development. For nations like the Armenians and the Georgians who were older and more advanced in their culture, this limited freedom naturally was not a big thing, not enough to relieve the pressure of the general oppression, because these nations had lost their independence only recently, an independence which offered them far greater freedom for their cultural development. But the more culturally backward peoples, such as the Tartars, the Kurds, the Caucasian mountaineers, the Bashkirs, the Kalmuks and the others who had neither a native alphabet nor literature, in the initial stages of the Soviet regime enjoyed a period of cultural rebirth. With the aid of the government they developed their alphabets and their literature which they used in their schools, their courts and their governmental institutions, whereas, in the days of the Tsars they had been deprived of those privileges. Even such nations as the Ukrainians and the Byelorussians who possessed an old and highly developed culture but who had been suppressed by the Tsars, likewise enjoyed a period of regeneration during the first years of the Soviet regime.

Unfortunately, this encouragement of the non-Russian peoples did not last long. It lasted as long as it was necessary for the consolidation of the Soviet regime. Then

followed a steadily increasing period of suppression during which time their intelligentsia was purged, including the Communist faction. By degrees the use of the native languages gave way to the Russian language in their schools and state institutions. The native military divisions were liquidated, their youth of military age were sent elsewhere and their place was taken by Russian troops.

This policy of cultural suppression had not yet reached its climax when World War II broke out and the Soviet government was obliged to relax the pressure in the interest of rallying the nationality groups around the war effort in defense of the "fatherland." To cater to the patriotic pride of the non-Russian peoples permission was given to go so far as to publish national epic poems, literary masterpieces, and the portraits of national heroes. But when the war was over and the Soviet no longer was under the necessity of placating the national spirit of the oppressed peoples the government promptly returned to its former policy of suppression.

Slowly it became apparent that the government had resumed the Tsarist policy of *russification* on a much larger scale and in far more deadly manner. The Tsarist policy of *white massacre* was now supplemented by Communist policy of *red massacre*.

Russian Communism Converted Into Russian Naziism

After the last war, in addition to the cultural debilitation of the non-Russian nationality groups, the Soviet government now resorted to a policy of physical annihilation. This was done by destroying the nationalist intelligentsia, by mass deportations of native population, and by filling the vacuum with Russian nationals. It is highly significant that, while in the non-Russian peoples the persecution is

aimed at the *nationalist elements*—the writers, the intellectuals, the artists, the professionals, and civic leaders—in Russia proper the persecution is directed primarily at the so-called *cosmopolits*. It is equally significant that after the war while in Russia proper the legend of "Mother Russia" was continued with enhanced impetus, exalting the Russian national traditions, the national heroes and their legendary exploits, including the ridiculous claim of every imaginable scientific invention of the past centuries to Russian genius, in the non-Russian republics national pride not only was not encouraged but Russian achievements, the language, the literature, the culture and the history were exalted to the skies. Russian conquest was declared a great boon for the conquered peoples and any liberation movement on the part of the oppressed peoples was denounced as reactionary bourgeois imperialism.

There is no doubt that the Soviet government, whether under Stalin or under his successors, will regard the great Russian nationality as the principal base of the preservation of the Russian empire, as well as the mainstay for the conquest of the world. The economic, political and military lever created by the Soviet regime has been supplemented by the *psychological* lever centered on the great Russian nationality. The Soviet aim is to complete the enslavement of the non-Russian peoples of the Soviet Union, to cement the tie with the satellite nations, and finally, to bring about the conquest of the free nations.

In reality, with the imperceptible and steadily growing transformation, the Soviet has become something like Hitler's great empire of national-socialism with this difference that, while Hitler regarded the *German* nation as the super race and on the strength of this super race he wanted

to conquer the world, Stalin and his successors have made the *great Russian* nation the object of their worship and the instrument of their world conquest. And if this Nazi tendency of the great Russian supremacy was not in evidence before the war, one must indeed be blind not to see it today.

It is not difficult to see the accelerated growth of this tendency after the war. During the war the Soviet leaders saw the resistance value of nationalistic appeal. The nationalist or patriotic incentive was far more powerful for the purpose of self defense and victory than the Communistic or socialistic appeal. This was the reason why the Communist ideological incentive was temporarily discarded during the war and its place taken by patriotic slogans.

Furthermore, during the war the Soviet rulers saw that the non-Russian nationalities were not so full-hearted in their resistance to the enemy as the Russians. In non-Russian regions the people welcomed the conqueror with open arms and hailed him as their liberator. The Soviet rulers naturally could not fail to notice this. This was the reason why, in a testimonial banquet celebrating the victory, Stalin pronounced his famous toast to the valiant great Russian people and the Red Army who were primarily responsible both for the glorious victory and the preservation of the Soviet Fatherland.

From this point to the road to Hitler was only a step. If it was the Great Russian nationality, preeminently, which saved the Soviet regime, it logically follows that it should be made the mainspring of national inspiration. Naturally it is most advantageous to cater that particular nationalistic vanity, to inflame its chauvinistic spirit, to extol its glorious tradition of the Great State, to exalt its national values, and to emphasize its superiority over the

other nationalities. Such a procedure would create the psychological leverage. Only in this manner could the Great Russian people be converted into a powerful weapon of world conquest.

When we consider the wanton aggressiveness of Hitler's chauvinism and the monumental conquests it made despite the German people's territorial and numerical limitations to begin with, how infinitely more deadly and how vastly more disastrous, it is needless to say, will be the Soviet menace when unleashed by the chauvinism and the aggressiveness of a Great Russian State whose territorial and numerical superiority over Hitler's Germany is beyond comparison.

The Big State

Unfortunately, the expatriated great Russian anti-Soviet leaders, being rabid nationalists, neither can, nor are inclined to realize that the Soviet government at present is traveling along Hitler's road. It has adopted a Russian version of Hitler's national socialism within the Soviet Union. It has been extending the new policy to the satellite countries. And there is no question that it is striving to extend it to the entire free world.

The constant and methodical inoculation of the Russian masses with the idea of an aggressive "Big Russian State" poses a serious danger to the world because, even if the Soviet regime should be overthrown, the Russian people will not readily relinquish the idea. They again will strive to extend their supremacy over their non-Russian neighbors.

It is most disturbing that Russian democratic leaders of the West themselves are subconsciously enamored with this Soviet offspring of a Big Russia. Instead of seeing the danger, instead of making a common front with their non-Russian anti-Soviet colleagues of the West to combat

the peril, instead of seeing the justice of the latter's insistence upon their right to absolute independence, they stubbornly cling to their nationalistic ambition, resent the idea of dismembering the great Russian empire, and turn a deaf ear to every sensible advice. What is worse, they are doing their utmost to win the Western leaders to the indispensibility of preserving the integrity of Stalin's Soviet empire.

Anti-Soviet Russian leaders even threaten the West: "If you support the secessionist tendencies of the non-Russian nationalities of the Soviet Union and help them dismember Russia, the Russian people will not help you overthrow the Soviet tyranny, but, on the contrary, will support the Soviet government to prevent the dismemberment of Russia. And because it is impossible to overthrow the Soviet dictatorship without the aid of the Russian people, the West must give its pledge that the indivisibility of Russia shall not be touched after the Bolsheviks have been thrown out."

This kind of logic, however, will not stand the test of serious criticism. First: In the overthrow of the Soviet regime the role of the Great Russian people cannot be greater than that of the non-Russian nationalities because numerically they exceed the Russians, while in point of hatred for the Soviet regime they will not take a back seat to the Russians.

Second: As long as the Russians are successful in keeping intact the empire which their dictators have built, as long as they continue to be inspired by notions of a big state or a big empire, as long as they are in a position to impose their rule over enslaved peoples, as long as they do not restrict themselves in their ethnographic borders, they shall never acquire the necessary favorable conditions for the establishment of a true democracy in their land.

Third: The free world, particularly Russia's neighbors, shall never feel safe as long as they harbor a neighbor, a vast empire to begin with, which is bent on further expansion. From the viewpoint of permanent peace it is intolerable that such a mighty empire should not be dismembered even if it should take the form of a democratic federation.

Finally, there is no guarantee, should Russia remain one and indivisible after the downfall of Bolshevism, even if under the form of a confederation of democratic republics, as the Russian democratic leaders fondly hope, that something similar to a fascist or Nazi regime will not be re-established in that vast empire—a regime which will not substantially differ from the Soviet regime although different in ideology and form.

The Case of the Nine Physicians

How much Stalin's successors dread controversies between their Russian and non-Russian nationalities, how much they fear the feeling of absolute insecurity of their subjects brought about the Soviet terror, is plainly seen by an editorial of Pravda devoted to the "conspiracy of the nine physicians."

The nine prominent doctors (their number was later increased to 15) were alleged to have conspired against the lives of two Politburo members, Scherbakov and Zhdanov. They also were accused of having conspired against the lives of prominent Russian generals. They had brought about the death of these men, or had accelerated their deaths through improper medical treatment. The accused physicians were arrested, and having confessed their guilt, would have been sentenced to certain death. Yet even before the passing of sentence the Soviet government hastened to decorate with the highest Soviet medal

a certain lady doctor who had testified against the accused doctors.

And presently, only a few weeks after Stalin's death, his successors took a wholly unexpected step. They officially declared that the nine doctors had been falsely accused and that their confessions had been obtained by illegal, third degree methods. The perpetrators of this crime were to be punished and the lady doctor was stripped of her medal.

There were various explanations for this astounding about face, the complete reversal of an official charge, so damaging to the Soviet rulers. Some ventured the opinion that Beria was taking his revenge upon those who, through this sham conspiracy, cast a doubt on his department when Stalin was alive. This explanation is not convincing because Ignatiev, the man who stood at the head of the so-called sham conspiracy, was later appointed Executive Secretary of the Communist Party by the successors of Stalin, including Beria himself.

It is true that Ignatiev has since been stripped of that office, but that does not prove that he and his assistant Ryumin were really punished for having conspired against Beria. These men undoubtedly acted under orders of Stalin and perhaps Beria himself. They simply became scape goats to the changed situation.

There are others who think that the nine doctors (now 15), six of them Jews, were pronounced innocent because Stalin's successors want to appease the public opinion of the outside world, the Jews in particular, because their persecution was interpreted abroad as a new Soviet policy of antisemitism. This consideration may have had a certain role in the policy of appeasement. But it seems the principal motive was internal, rather than external. This is made plain by the following pas-

sages from a Pravda editorial which is exceedingly eloquent:

"The despicable adventurers of the type of Ryumin, through their fabricated investigation, attempted to inflame in the Soviet society, which is forged by moral and political unity and ideas of proletarian internationalism, feelings of natural antagonism which are profoundly alien to the Socialist ideology. Aiming at these provocative ends, they did not stop at frantic slander on Soviet people.

"According to the report of the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs, the organs of the former Ministry of State Security have grossly violated Soviet law, permitted arbitrariness and ill use of authority. Criminal actions of this kind could not remain undiscovered and unpunished for long, for the Soviet Government stands guard over the rights of the citizens of our country, defends these rights with care and punishes severely, without regard to persons and ranks, those who permit arbitrariness.

"In the USSR Constitution the great rights of a citizen of the Soviet Socialist state are inscribed. Article 127 of the USSR Constitution has insured the citizens of the USSR with the inviolability of the person. Nobody can be subjected to arrest without the decision of the court or the state prosecutor. Socialist law defends the rights of Soviet citizens which are inscribed in the USSR Constitution and is a most important basis for the further development and strengthening of the Soviet state. Nobody will be permitted to violate Soviet law. Every worker, every collective farmer and every Soviet intellectual can work peacefully and confidently, knowing that his civil rights are under the reliable guard of Soviet Socialist law."

The Soviet official organ's these significant statements which no doubt were reprinted in all Soviet newspapers in a dozen languages, leave no doubt that

Stalin's successors are exerting extraordinary efforts to placate their subject peoples. They feel that their pacifistic assurances, the amnesty to political offenders and the relaxation on consumers goods were not enough to appease the people. They realize that they must do something more than this if the people were to trust them a little more than they did Stalin who cynically flouted the "Soviet law" every day and everywhere, when the arbitrary law of one man ran rampant in all parts of the Soviet world, when no one was sure that he would not be the next victim of the dictators whim. And because the universal fear psychosis was likely to assume dangerous proportions if the people continued to think that nothing had been changed since Stalin's death, by their corrective act Stalin's successors want to assure the people and especially the Communists, state servants and the army, that the willful acts of Stalin's time shall no longer be repeated, that henceforth it is the "Soviet law" which shall prevail, that the rights of the citizens shall be held inviolate, and that the willful acts of the officials shall be severely punished.

Stalin felt no need of giving the people similar assurances, especially after his victorious war, because he felt secure and had no fear of the people and the Communist party whom he had reduced to a rabble of slaves. Besides, he was not sufficiently and accurately informed because he had completely cut himself off from his people, while his associates who now have taken over were afraid to tell him the truth. They told him only what would please him.

Now that these associates have taken over the power and are acquainted with the mood of the people at home and abroad far better than their master ever was, they can no longer remain indifferent like Stalin, they cannot scorn the public mood, they cannot continue the provocative tac-

tics of Stalin, but are forced to move tactfully. The trivial concessions they are making are calculated to dissipate the general sense of insecurity and to create the illusion that things are better now in the Soviet world.

By freeing these fifteen doctors and by punishing the authors of their persecution, Stalin's successors apparently hope to win a greater degree of public trust and thus to consolidate their power.

But it is not difficult to predict even now that the Soviet rulers will not succeed in this new attempt. First: The thing called "Soviet law" is nothing but a wanton arbitrariness, a sham and a deceit, based on the crudest and most cynical tyranny. Second: There can be no real reform in the Soviet world as long as that "law" which feeds upon the shameless exploitation of the people is not completely destroyed together with its terrorism, as long as the "law" is not replaced by another system which is founded on justice, freedom and morality, a system which will guarantee to mankind lasting peace, pros-

perity and peaceful evolution.

At all events, Stalin's successors are not the men who are capable of really paving the way for such a change. The best they can do is to continue the ruinous work of Lenin and Stalin, a little differently perhaps, a little more conciliatory, but always deceptive and insincere.

In ways somewhat different from Lenin and Stalin, they will strive to expand the Soviet slave empire of their masters until they are shattered against the stone wall or succeed in attaining their goal, namely, the conquest of the whole world.

Naturally, the free world can do no other than to keep its guard up, not to be deceived by the chicaneries of the new dictators, not to be taken in by their new tactics, but to continue to grow stronger, militarily, economically, politically and morally, to close up its ranks and to fight against the Soviet imperialism for the preservation of the free world. As long as the Soviet totalitarian dictatorship is intact, the free world must never forget that its salvation lies in its own unity and power.



RISKO – SEPO

AVETIS AHARONIAN

When I was a little boy of five or six, I still remember, one spring day a Kurd came to our village from the mountains. He was a chip off the rocks, tall and boney, powerful, with long arms, his wooly chest bared, a bronzed face in which twin small restless eyes shone in their deep sockets, and a falcon-like hooked nose with dilated nostrils. He was a towering giant clad in a flowing woolen garment topped by a yellow woolen doublet, his feet shod with heavy moccasins and his legs firmly encased with leather lacings. He wore a Kurdish headgear of felt which the natives called *Kecheh*, draped with a *Sarik* of colorful handkerchiefs. Risko was a youth of about twenty-five.¹

So, he came out of nowhere and stood there in our village.

He was a shepherd, of course, as seen by the famous Kurdish flute tucked neatly in two folds of his tunic and the huge shepherd's staff which he held in his hands with a single blow of which he could break a man's back.

He stood there in the centre of the village and asked if the village needed a tender of the cow herd. He spoke to no one in particular, but rather addressed himself to the space, to whom it might concern.

The village needed no shepherd of the sheep, but there was need of a tender of

the cows, so, Risko was hired to tend the cows. The transaction was so casual that in a few days Risko was completely forgotten. You might say he had been born in the village and had become the village cow tender. Early in the morning, before sunrise, he would stand there in the center of the village, his lunch bag dangling on his side, and taking his flute to his lips he would play a wailing tune until the animals came out of their barns... the gray ponderous buffaloes with angry eyes, the swaying strutting females, the cows with their heavy coquetry, the light limbed restless young cows frolicking with the bulls, sniffing one another, and the short-snouted calves, their nostrils wide open to the wind and the perfume of the meadows, their tails sticking out, scampering all around. Thus the animals flocked together, side by side, crowding, pushing, sniffing one another, tail to tail, head to head, snout to snout, they came in droves puffing, panting, bellowing, all passing before Risko's stern eyes, pricking their ears for a moment to the sound of the flute, then merging in the gray concourse.

This was Risko's family which he surveyed with boundless admiration.

When the herd was assembled, Risko would stop playing the flute. Ho, ho, ho, ho... Risko's ringing voice was the signal for the herd to start moving for the meadow. In a moment the kick of thousands of hooves would raise a cloud of dust covering everything, and Risko would be lost in the thick cloud.

¹This rough draft of a short story from the pen of the great Armenian writer Avetis Aharonian was published after his death, in the January, 1950 issue of the Armenian language *Hairenik* Monthly.

In the evening, thick with the red dust, and ho-ho-ing, Risko would bring the herd home, would deliver each animal to each home, as he knocked on the door with a heavy thump of his staff, calling, "Bread, bring me bread."

Each family gave him a loaf of bread which he threw into his sack slung from his shoulder. This was his payoff.

He went through this procedure with the regularity of the clock, like the rising and the setting of the sun.

At nights Risko slept wherever it was handy. It might be on the porch, in the yard, or the barn of any home, depending on the season. Using a sheaf of hay for a pillow, and his woolen tunic for a blanket, he would lie there and go to sleep. And wherever he slept he made a gift of the loaves of bread which he had collected to his host. Besides he did errands for the family. That was the reason why Risko was a welcome guest everywhere. He belonged to the village, and the village belonged to him. Whether or not he earned anything, he lived on just enough bread to fill his stomach.

Who was Risko? Where had he come from? From what village, what mountain, what valley? No one asked him. Risko himself said nothing about it. He was in the village and he was not. To be precise, he did not belong to the society, but was a part of the animals, dumb, inarticulate, and obedient to, one knows not what fate. As far as the village was concerned his story could be told in four words: "Kurd of the Mountains . . ." It seemed one day the mountain had labored, the rocks had moved, and Risko had come into the world, the giant Risko with powerful arms and sides, his woolen tunic on his shoulder, in his hand a shepherd's staff, a colorful *sarikh* on his head, and a flute tucked in the folds of his tunic, he himself not knowing how it all came about. He was the

Kurd of the mountain, born of the mountain, especially for tending the village herd.

Risko had neither smile nor anger, neither sorrow nor joy; he was dumb as nature and unemotional as the rock. Occasionally he murmured something through his thick mustache to this or that animal, and it seemed he directed his speechless herd by his sheer look.

Life went on around Risko with its customary tempo. People struggled, toiled, earned, loved, were born and died. All this never mattered to the Kurd of the mountain. He took his herd to the meadow, brought it back home, but never saw anything, never aspired to anything, never sought anything in this world except his flute whose rolling notes rang in the morning, and the piece of bread which he collected at the end of the day.

Only in the distant fields, when the cow gave birth to a calf, or the buffalo to a young one, Risko would shoulder the young one and bring him to the home of the owner. He would lower the young one with extraordinary tenderness as if it were his own child, the light of happiness shining in his eyes, and instead of a smile his mustache trembled as he solemnly pronounced the glad tidings:

"May this one be a thousand, *Khatoon* . . . good lady. May this one be a thousand!" Meaning, of course, "May God grant a thousand young ones like this."

That day Risko would spend the night in that home, taking care of the young one.

That was our Risko, the herder of our village.

One day there was a rumor in our village that Risko would become an Armenian, that he would be baptized. Before long the rumor became a confirmed news. The village was agog with the amazing information and women were busy with speculation. Old women said Risko had had a wonderful dream, the Holy Illumina-

tor himself had appeared to him in a vision, clothed in holy light, had awakened Risko and asked him: "How come you have been eating the righteous bread of Christian Armenians for this long and still you are an infidel?" That Risko had passed out at the vision, and when he came to he had rushed to the village priest and had asked him to baptize him right away, make him an Armenian Christian, otherwise he was afraid the vision would appear again. Others said St. Jacob had descended from Mount Masis in the night, that Risko had seen the venerable saint with the white beard, clothed in light, who commanded him to be baptized at once otherwise he would go blind in both eyes. And still others insisted that one night when he was in the fields, from a distance Risko had seen the lamp of Gregory the Illuminator on Mount Arakadz.

As always, Risko was silent. The only thing, they had seen him a few times coming out of the priest's home.

It was the holiday of *Astvatatzin* . . . the holy begotten of God. At the evening ceremonies the gaze of all the worshippers was centered on one point, the pillar to the right against which was leaning a tall man.

It was Risko.

The hapless barbarian was stunned by the church lights, the sight of the images, the richly ornamented altar, the vestments of the priest, the melodious and enchanting liturgy, and infinitely troubled and shrunken, Risko stood there swaying on his legs, desperately trying to hold himself erect, and with one hand wiping off the perspiration from his forehead. The church was in a commotion, old women crossed themselves, and men reverently looked at one another at sight of this wonderful miracle, some exchanged whispers, little boys and girls, desperately trying to suppress the laughter in their eyes, were pointing with their fingers at the Kurd of the

Mountain who, sensing their burning gaze, the confusion around him, was agitated even more; he shriveled, as if trying to vanish, to disappear, if possible, and in this desperation he looked even more funny.

And yet the miracle had happened. The Kurd of the mountain was in the church. Therefore, Risko's dreams must have been true.

At the end of the ritual another miracle happened. Our priest who had never opened his mouth in his life to preach a sermon, suddenly turned to the people, and in a voice shaking with emotion, he said:

"Blessed people . . ."

The priest's voice trembled. He stopped. The people were waiting. There was a dead silence, all whisperings had stopped, all glances were now turned on the priest.

"Blessed people!" repeated the priest, still looking for words, the proper words for the great occasion. The Illuminator had appeared to the conscience of this wild Kurd, he had shed upon him the light of his lamp, it was a miracle, and the priest was searching for the miracle words which he could not find.

"Blessed people!" for the third time the priest repeated, nervously tugging at his white beard . . . "Blessed people, divine . . . by the will of the Almighty and with the holy blessings of our Father the Illuminator, this Kurd of the mountain, Risko . . . Huh, what do you say, son?" he turned to the Kurd.

Risko completely lost himself, then, with a supreme effort he moved toward the priest, then retraced his steps, as if trying to run away, and then suddenly he roared with a mighty voice, "*Ha, Ha, Terter djan* . . . Yes, Yes, Father dear . . . Bless me, bless me," and he knelt before the priest.

"Blessed people!" the priest said once again, "Well, what shall I say? This is the baptism of the wild Kurd," and the old man

began to sob with emotion. There were sobbings from the women's side.

It was the triumph of the Holy Illuminator. The church had been glorified.

That day Risko spent the night at the priest's home.

The next day, Sunday, Risko was to be baptized in the church. The entire village turned out to witness the ceremony. The place was so crowded that there was no room even for a needle. Solomon the sexton was tolling the bells endlessly. Mardo, the priest's assistant, dressed in his blue velvet jacket, his face clean shaven, his head bare, his white hair beaten by the wind, was busy making the necessary arrangements, he was dragging a huge boiler in the center of the courtyard to serve as a baptismal basin. The priest was dressed in his pontifical vestments. Dado and his old wife stood on either side of the basin, as godfather and godmother.

Risko was inside the church.

The sexton Solomon came out of the church and whispered something in the priests's ear.

"Dress him with a church gown," the priest ordered in a loud voice.

It became plain that the Kurd had stripped naked and had no shirt with which to come out. A moment later the wild Kurd came out, dressed in the church gown, and, amid both laughter and prayers, he stepped into the basin.

The priest sprinkled water on his head, anointed his forehead with the holy unction, and named him Stepannos.

"What does the infant desire?"

"The infant desires faith, hope and love," replied Dado the godfather, and Risko became an Armenian Christian, his new name Stepannos. The giant stood erect, his wet shirt clinging to his body, blinked at the multitude, and suddenly laughed and cried at the same time.

When the ceremony was over the crowd dispersed.

"Nonsense! The Kurd of the mountain cannot become an Armenian." The speaker was Europis Tatos, the perpetual contradictor of the village. He was called Europis because in his conversations he always spoke of Europe, using highly intellectual words.

"Huh What? Again Europe?" retorted Sado. "Why should he not become an Armenian? Is not the Kurd just as much of a man? Is he not human? Has he no cares?"

"He has. But he is a Kurd all the same. This thing which happened is neither European nor German. The Kurd is the offspring of the wolf. His eyes are always in the woods and the mountains, 'especially the mountains.'"

"Especially" was Europis' pet word, the meaning of which he alone knew.

"You are blowing from Europe again, a pest on your 'especially!'"

At this the crowd chuckled.

"Risko and Stepannos! How far apart—e-m-i—buffalo."

"No, a-z-g-r—Europe . . ." replied Sado.

The crowd again chuckled.

"We shall see," said Thados.

"We shall see, he will become a better Armenian than you," Sado replied.

The crowd dispersed.

Risko's baptism made no perceptible change in the manner of his life.

Risko was changed to Stepannos, and Stepannos to Sepo. Like before, Risko-Sepo in the mornings stood in the center of the village, played his flute, gathered the animals and went to the meadow. After the day's work, he spent the nights wherever it was convenient. The ceremony of the baptism, too, was forgotten and the village reverted to its old life.

Years passed. One spring day, in the

evening when the village rendezvous was crowded with people, and prince and priest, after the day's toil, were ensconced in their seats for the customary evening gossip, Risko-Sepo returned with his herd from the fields, and contrary to his custom, stopped in the midst of the crowd. An old Kurd had come from the mountains with a load of cheese to sell to the villagers. Sepo approached the old man, and leaning on his staff, looked long and searchingly in his face. Then suddenly he roared, "Hay Hoo, it is you, my enemy Haso, it is you alright. God has brought you before me. We have an old score to settle."

Stunned by this sudden development, the crowd surrounded the two champions. The old Kurd rose to his feet, backed up against the wall, and leaning on his staff, took a defensive position.

"What old score?" he asked calmly.

"What score? Have you forgotten, Haso? You killed my father. I have been looking for you for ten years. My mother has sworn. You shall pay for my father's blood."

"It's true, I killed him," the old man replied calmly, clinging tight to his staff.

"Yes, its true. Ha ha. Come out now like a man. You have a staff, I have one. One of us must die."

There was no longer any Sepo. It was Risko who had come to life with all the wild, elemental ferocity of the Kurd of the mountains. He was verily shaking with anger, roaring, pacing back and forth, fire burst from his eyes like the tiger which prepares to pounce on his prey. He cast aside his woolen tunic, stretched his mighty arms, and raised his staff.

"All right. Come on, fight. You killed my father. I have sworn to my mother. We are foes."

The old man stood there, frightened and pale, leaning against the wall and looking at the crowd piteously.

"I am an old man," he said, "you are young."

"Very well," Risko said, "you strike the first blow. Go ahead and strike. Huh. Are you afraid? You coward *Khavthar*."

Risko was shaking bodily from his anger, his chest heaving, swaying his staff and threatening his foe. Bewildered and fascinated, the crowd was watching the unusual duel which had begun. They heard only Risko's voice, his furious panting.

"Come on fight. You can't escape me this time."

"Sepo, son, what are you doing?" It was the priest who spoke.

"He killed my father, he must pay for my father's blood, Father *chan*."

"Sepo, son, this man has no blood debt to you."

"Bah! He killed my father, my father."

"That was Risko's father. You are Sepo, you are no longer Risko. You must shed no blood, you are a Christian Armenian."

Sepo was shaken. He turned his blood-shot eyes toward the people beseechingly.

"Father *chan*, Father dear, let me be a sacrifice to your right hand, I am Sepo, very well, I am a Christian Armenian, very well, the church is my witness, the Holy Illuminator is my witness, this man killed my father, I have sworn to my mother, my mother will curse me from her grave."

"The curse of the Kurd has no hold on the Christian Armenian, the Christian Armenian must forgive, that's what the Gospel says."

"You mean I must let this enemy of mine go free?"

"Yes, he must go free."

"What would the Papa Illuminator have said?"

"The Papa Illuminator says the same thing. You must forgive your enemies. His hand is stained with blood, your hand has been anointed with unction, it must

remain clean. He is an old man. He won't live more than two years. Do not dip your hand in his blood."

"*Vay lemen baco, vay lemen baco . . .* Woe unto my father, woe unto my father" . . . Risko sobbed. "Go Haso, go. For the sake of Papa the Illuminaotr, go, for the sake of this old man, go."

The old man gathered his load and was off in a hurry.

"Huh! Did you see? You can't make an Armenian out of a Kurd," commented Europis Tatos cynically.

"Europis, a curse upon your 'especially,' reproached the priest.

"If he meets him somewhere else, he will surely kill him, especially because he is the offspring of a wolf, Father. Whether you read a gospel over him, whether you give him your benediction, the offspring of a wolf is still the offspring of a wolf," retorted Europis Tatos.

As always, that year our vineyards and fields yielded a rich harvest, sharpening the appetites of the thieves. The Turkish and Kurdish thieves gave no let up. There was not a night when some thief did not enter some vineyard or field, doing away with the grape or the melon. Not every man could afford to keep a watch over his property at nights. And after each looting the village would be stormed with fury, devising ways and means to stop the thievery, but all to no avail. Aran the locksmith destroyed his vineyard just so he would not risk the lives of his sons by making them watchmen. The village was seething with anger and tension. In the midst of this strain, one day Dsovetntz Panos caught a thief in the act, an old Kurdish woman who had been deserted by her accomplices. Another woman accused the old woman of stealing her melons. They brought the thief to the village. The entire population of the village turned out to witness the judgement.

The general resentment which had accumulated for weeks burst upon the head of this poor old Kurdish woman. The crowd was sizzling with anger, each newcomer swearing and cursing the culprit.

"We must smash her head."

"We must smash her head."

"We must bury her alive."

"Tie her to a pillar, let her rot there."

"Throw her into a well, let the accursed hag drown."

And they all were thinking of a new way of punishment.

The old woman stood there, leaning against her donkey, and staring at the crowd as if the matter did not concern her. Presently, Europis Tatos edged his way to the front. "Especially, see to it that she is not Sepo's mother," he said sarcastically. "What are you waiting for? Call the priest, let him baptize her. Instead of one, we shall have two converted Armenians. Sado's wife will soon die. We can marry Sado to this old woman." And, without waiting, he approached the old woman and kicked her. The crowd followed suit, and on all sides, they trampled the poor old woman under their feet.

"*Vay az koshdim az koshdim*—Woe is me, I die, I die"—the poor woman shrieked under the blows.

Suddenly there was another scream, a mighty roar.

"A pest upon you all. The priest, where is the priest? What would Papa the Illuminator say now?"

It was Risko, foaming with fury. Like a storm he pierced the crowd, reached the side of the old woman, raised her to her feet and stood before her protectingly.

"She is a thief," they cried from all sides. "Sepo, she is a thief."

"Sepo? What Sepo? Me Sepo? Or am I Risko? What happened to my father's blood? If I am Sepo, why do you want to kill this poor woman? Is the thing she stole

more precious than my father's blood?
Vay, lemen, bavo, vay lemen bavo—Woe
 my father, woe my father."

A shudder went through the crowd.

"Where is Papa the Illuminator? I am
 asking you, am I Risko or Sepo? What hap-
 pened to my father's blood? Was the for-
 giveness only for my father? What would
 the Illuminator say, oh Christian Armen-
 ians?"

The crowd silently receded.

It was night. Risko was alone with the
 old Kurdish woman in the center of the
 village. And, through the dark streets,
 with the wounded old woman, he was going
 to the priest's home.

Risko had some questions to ask the
 priest.

(Translated by J. G. M.)

SPRING SONG

*There is a symphony in
 fast melting snow,
 And joy in the sound of winds
 that blow;
 Soft, late twilight falls
 our way—
 'Tis Spring, oh wonderful
 lovely day!*

*There is a sweet curve in the sky,
 A hush in the trees; Our hearts so high
 Are reckless, full and overflowing,
 Like Spring, it knows the miracle of growing.*

SUZANNE BASMAJIAN NATOWITZ

Potsdam, New York
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ARMENO-GEORGIAN CULTURAL RELATIONS OF THE PAST

H. KURDIAN

The January, 1953 issue of *The Voice of Free Georgia* carries an article by Alexander Tsomaia under the caption of "The Georgian Question" in which a number of points deserve correction in the interest of historical accuracy.

As yet, no exhaustive research work has been published on Armeno-Georgian relations, although there is a considerable amount of partial studies devoted to random aspects or topics which have been published.

Throughout history the Armenians and the Georgians have maintained close relations with one another like twin sister peoples. It is this close racial, political and cultural relationship which at times has been jeopardized by ignorance and stupid fanaticism, often promoting discord and even a rift between the two peoples. Unquestionably, the proud and freedom-loving Georgian has succeeded in retaining his independence much longer than the Armenian, has lost far more at the hand of "Christian" and "liberating" Russian imperialism. He has been deceived by the Russian more often than the Armenians. Politically speaking, the Georgian was more flexible in the era of the Savafid dynasty, as well as during the Tsarist and Soviet dictatorships.

There have been times when Georgian forces united with the Armenian semi-independent forces and fought together, shed their blood, and strove to lighten the pres-

sure of foreign invaders on Armenia. As a creative, culturally endowed and commercial people, the Armenians in turn have greatly aided in the intellectual, spiritual and economic development of the Georgian people. The indisputable evidence of history leaves no doubt about this.

It is with full realization of this precious relationship that I wish, not only to point out, but to correct a few historical errors which have slipped in Mr. Tsomaia's article.

Tsomaia writes: "The invention of Georgian national alphabet—unique in character and completely free of Armenian, Syrian, Greek or Latin influences—took place in the 4th century before Christ."

This testimony needs an explanation. Indeed, we have bibliographical evidence, according to which there existed in Georgia a sort of ancient script before Mesrop Mashtotz (inventor of the Armenian alphabet) formulated the Georgian "Khoutzuri" alphabet.

History tells us that King Mirian of Georgia, before the spread of Christianity in Georgia in the 4th century, to familiarize himself with the new religion, read "many old and new books, including the Book of Nimrod." But there is no testimony that these old and new books, as well as the Book of Nimrod, were written in Georgian script.

Too, Saint Nouneh, a holy virgin to

Georgian King whose name was Bagour, and to one named Moses who was Bishop of that region. These men received him cordially and obeyed him in accordance with the laws of God, both the King and the soldiers of all the provinces. And he (Mashtotz), having presented his masterly art in letters, advised them with his exhortations. (Meaning, he taught them the letters and they learned it.)

"He found there a man named Djagha, a literate and truthful man, who was highly suited for the role of Georgian translator. Thereupon, the King of Georgia ordered the children of all the provinces of his domain to be sent to the Vardapet (Mashtotz.) Taking these children, Mashtotz put them through the crucible of education, and with the zeal of his spiritual love, purged them of the dross and the rust of the puss-infected demons, and rid them of idolatry. And he so far separated them from their ancestral mode of life that he completely expunged the thought in their mind, as much as to make them say they had completely forgotten their relatives and their ancestral homes."

Koriun does not say that he saw the Georgian alphabet in a vision as tradition says about the Armenian alphabet. Mashtotz "took and set in order the figures of the Georgian language," meaning, he classified and set them in order, and he "avrin-avk hardarer," meaning, he devised the figures in accordance with the laws of phonetics, for the use of the Georgian people.

It is these Georgian letters of Mashtotz which now are called the Khoutzuri alphabet, used especially in the churches, the language of the Georgian ritual.

The Khoutzuri alphabet differs strikingly with the so-called "Mkhetrouli," namely, the secular or military alphabet, the former being written on a straight line, where-

as the latter is a series of curves, hooks and rings.

Manifestly, even by the testimony of Koriun, there was a "Georgian language." The man named Djagha, a well-known literator, is said to have been appointed as translator of that Georgian language. Even as the Armenians had a highly developed popular language before the invention of their alphabet, so it is certain that the Georgians had a clearly defined language of their own before the invention of their alphabet. At the same time, in both sister nationalities, the national language lacked a national alphabet. Mesrop Mashtotz filled this void for both peoples.

We do not know what type of script was in vogue in Georgia before the invention of Mesrop Mashots. There are those who think the Georgians used the Zenda script, finding a similarity in it with the "Mkhetrouli." This fact has lent support to the theory that the Georgians possessed letters as early as before the 4th century in the days of King Pharnavaz.

But, not a single Mkhetrouli letter, memorandum, or record of the pre-Mesropian Khoutzuri era has reached us to support the theory.

It is true that the Zenda script was in use in Georgia at the time of Pharnavaz. But there is no reason to believe that the Georgians were influenced by the Zenda script figures since even the Armenians were free of such influence. Too, the Zenda was written from right to left while the Georgian was written from left to right. The similarities which are discerned apply only to the letters and the forms of the letters, much the same as the similarity between the Abyssinian letters and the Armenian iron prints. This similarity undoubtedly is accidental rather than by design. In all probability, the Mkhetrouli was derived from the Khoutzuri and not the Zenda.

The oldest specimens of Georgian penmanship have come to us from the Khouturi and not the Zenda. Moreover, as we have said, no sample of the ancient Georgian Mkhetroutli has come down to us, and those which have reached us must be regarded as pure supposition until they are established by irrefutable proof.

The Georgian Khoutzuri is unlike the Armenian alphabet with the exception of a few letters, writes Allen in the above-mentioned work (Note I). Nevertheless Allen admits that Mesrop Mashtotz introduced the Khoutzuri in Georgia in the 5th century A.D. The invention of Mashtotz indeed lent a unique character to the Georgian Khoutzuri letters, endowing the Georgian language with an alphabet which, in originality of sounds, in its richness, and in its genuineness has no equal among other alphabets.

In his abovementioned article Alexander Tsomaia adds:

"The 11th and 12th centuries were the Golden Age of Georgia. At that time Georgia composed the region of the entire Caucasus, extending from the Black Sea to the Caspian, and from the Caucasian Mountains to the border of Armenia. Judging from archeological and cultural relics, Georgian literature, painting, architecture and the other arts were in full efflorescence at this period, as compared with Europe."

It would be well if Mr. Tsomaia did not forget in his just zeal the lion's share which the Armenians had in the political, military, economic and cultural life of Georgia. The Orbelians and many other great or small Armenian princes and their princely houses, despite the fact that they were semi-independent, greatly contributed to the extension and the consolidation of the Georgian king's power with their arms. In architecture, no one can deny the large share which Armenian artisans and

architects brought to the ancient reconstruction of Georgia. Likewise we cannot forget the contribution of the Armenians to Georgian literature whose greatest shining star, Shota Rustavelli, was an Armenian named Ashot from the little village of Rustav between Akhalkkha and Khertviz.

It is no matter that Georgia never was strong enough to expand as far as the border of Armenia. Would that she had had the power to do so in those black days. It is no matter that Tsomaia fails to mention the services of Thornkantz of Sassoun, or the Kurapaghats of Taiq, Sarkis Mkharkurtzeli, Avak Amir Spasalari, Zacharia, Hovhannes, Vahram and the long list of other Armenians who became the pride and the glory of Georgia, neither before or after whom has the star of Georgia shone so brightly.

Any attempt to write any period of Georgian history, without mentioning the role of the Armenians, to me, can never be true history. I admit that the Georgians have had distinguished leaders, such as David the Great, known as the Builder, Queen Tamara and others whose state survived the Seljuk and Tartar invasions, which withstood the terrors of Timurlane, which endured the arbitrary supremacy of the Persian Savafids, until she fell victim to the perfidy of "Christian" Russian imperialism which put an end to Georgian independence in 1801, and scarcely a decade later absorbed the autonomy of the Georgian Church. Whereas, the Armenians gave way to the Seljuk invasions, and instead of showing determinations to do or die, they took the road to exile in Crimea, Poland and Cilicia where the Armenian innate love of independence flourished for a brief period within the narrow limits of the Cilician Kingdom, and gradually shrinking, was stifled in 1375. Thereafter the Armenians became a persecuted and captive people while the Georgians manage

to retain a checkered independence. This proves that the Georgian state was superior to the Armenian's capacity for retaining its independence.

But when it comes to culture and economics, it is an entirely different question. Georgia has greatly benefitted from the indisputable Armenian superiority in creative genius, in the arts, and in economic and cultural activity. The invention of the Georgian alphabet by St. Mashtots is the most striking proof of Armenia's capacity for meeting the cultural demands of the Georgian people.

Would that some happy day someone would present us with a serious, exhaustive scientific research study on Armeno-Georgian relations. Such a work would completely dissipate the ignorance, the narrow-minded chauvinism, and the misunderstandings deliberately fostered by foreign influence which hitherto have prevailed between the two sister peoples, and insure for them a vital and enduring spirit of mutual cooperation, especially with the prospect of both Georgia's and Armenia's final emancipation from the suffocating nightmare of Soviet Bolshevism.



SISTER EMILY

KRIKOR ZOHRAB

The beginning of 1884 I was taken to the German Hospital of Pera for a slight operation. I was to stay there for about fifteen days, that's what they told me. Actually, however, I remained there for three months. This happened partly because of my sickness, and partly because of my reluctance to leave the place. Has it ever been heard that a patient, after he has completely recovered, should persist to remain in a hospital. In childhood there are times when a little boy will play sick in order to keep away from school, but for a hefty youth to despise the fresh and free outside air and be willing to stay in a hospital bed for months is a rare thing.

Mine was of the latter kind and finally my sham illness was exposed. My normal pulse, the creeping red in my cheeks, and mostly the irresistible demands of my healthy stomach let the cat out of the bag. It seems to me however, that it was my loose mouth which precipitated my expulsion from the hospital. Thus, one day they told me that there was no longer any reason for me to stay at the hospital, that the hospital was not a hotel.

The fourth day I entered the hospital, as I recollect, they operated on me. Insensible under the effect of the chloroform, I never felt the dissections of the knife. When I came to, there were no visible effects upon me except that feeling of boundless lassitude which follows a long stupefaction. Were it not for my white bandages, were it not for the Sister of Mercy who sat beside me and constantly warned me not

to move, I myself would not have believed the change which had come upon me.

Upon the return of my senses, however, a slight but deep restlessness which gradually changes into shooting pains, obviously the sore of my cut up flesh and nerves, started to drive me out of my bed. It seems this was foreseen because the Sister of Mercy, who never left my side, constantly would sustain me:

"The pain will pass in a moment. Be patient, son, don't move, otherwise your wound will break again."

As my pain increases my moans begin to fill the room, rising steadily into shrill cries. I seem to be insensible to my surroundings. Seated on a wooden chair beside me, the Sister continues to pour out her words of comfort as if she has learned them by rote and has repeated to countless other patients like me:

"The pain will pass in a moment. Hold tight now. You are wholly well again."

How could I be well just when the excruciating pain was driving me mad, almost forcing me to break the bandages and tear out my flesh, my entrails, the parts which were tormenting me? At my slightest stirring in the bed the Sister would fix me with a sharp look, almost angrily: "Don't move. Oh no, that will never do," and rising to her feet she would warn me, "I shall be angry with you."

When she said she would be angry with me I looked straight into her eye. Was this woman crazy, not to be able to under-

stand my suffering? It was unbelievable. What I saw on her pale face, wasted as it were like a waxen candle, was not sympathy but a supreme delight as it were, a smile hanging from that small puckered mouth which brightened her face, making it look even more lovely.

Although I was in excruciating agony, nevertheless I was fascinated by her incomprehensible smugness. So unusual and irrelevant was her exultation over my sufferings. She looked like a flower sprinkled with the dew, tall, and somewhat lean, with bending head covered with a nun's white bonnet whose twin wings reminded one of a perching dove. Her dark green felt skirt naturally was not luxurious but its simplicity was becoming to her magnificent stature, and although she wore no corset, the narrowness of her waist did not escape the eye.

It is reasonable to believe that my pain must have softened somewhat, since I was able to analyze the woman's figure so minutely. Moreover, an imperceptible trace of the years was clearly discernible on the paleness which spread over her face. What attracted me most was the expression on her face, made lovelier by her mysterious joy, a thing which infuriated me a little. When one is in pain and distress naturally he looks for sympathy. Grief is the only thing which one wishes or demands to share with another. And now, there was a woman beside me who seemingly was delighted with my suffering, actually enjoying it. Even when she was flooding me with her comforting words, I could not fail to notice the reflection of her inner joy on her pale face, even as one discerns the color of a lamp chimney from the light which burns inside.

At first I attributed this impression of mine to my egotism, a natural displeasure, perhaps, that my companion did not share my grief. The truth is, her tender care

never failed me, she was constantly with me when they changed my bandages, she personally attended to all my needs. Day by day my wounds began to heal and I regained my strength. But the more I advanced in my recovery, by the same degree the smile on the Sister's face diminished, just like the sun's ray which hides itself behind the mountain at sunset. She did not linger long with me as before but attended to those whose cries of pain, piercing the walls, reached even to my ears at times. But when she returned to my side, her face lit with the same secret joy which I noticed at my moments of greatest suffering, she again would relapse into indifference and the smile from her face would slowly vanish.

Sister Emily who attended on me had the reputation of a courageous nurse: The doctors had pronounced her as one among a million. She was always present at the most gory of operations, unemotional and undisturbed as ever, mechanically doing her duty in a sea of blood, mangled bodies, and the gruesome vivisection of flesh, sinews and nerves of the human body. It seemed she reveled in the pain of others, their blood-curdling shrieks, and their pitiful implorings for pity. There was not a patient whose anguish, whose meanings, and whose frantic curses she had not heard. Wherever there was moaning she was sure to be present, especially when the patient was a male. To them she was a veritable guardian angel, an angel of mercy, waiting on them with a steely courage and a heroism which was unusual. I often wondered what was the source of this fortitude in such a fragile and phlegmatic frame.

My recuperation was proceeding normally and I had many opportunities for long conversations with Sister Emily. It seemed she herself took great pleasure in my audacious philosophical conclusions which, if not accurate in point of judge-

ment, at least were honest. She would listen to my omissions of the truth with patient silence. Sometimes I expatiated on sociological problems, spiritual experiences, or the future of mankind, and at such times I had a highly intelligent and serious-minded conversationalist before me. She was an educated woman with a brilliant mind, and at such moments she would shed off the assumed dignity of the Convent Sister and would talk with me quite freely.

. . .

One day, during one of these conversations, she told me that she was the daughter of a nobleman from Munich, could paint and sing, and in addition to all other good qualities, she had had a good education. And my wonder would mount seeing her here in an Istanbul hospital when a woman of her accomplishments had every right to a happy life, and the mystery lent an added halo to her thousand charms.

I felt myself small, very small, in her presence now. I put a check on my grandiloquence and, with a reverence which stemmed from my very heart, I welcomed her every time she entered my room. Her snow white nun's bonnet looked like a shining diadem to my eyes underneath which I could imagine the shimmer of her golden tresses.

By this time she became the object of my constant thought. From a distance, I could recognize the sound of her light footsteps. And when she entered my room my whole body would tremble from sheer happiness.

I was no longer the former talkative, jesting lad, but had become a stuttering infant, and sometimes a delirious poet—two extremes between which lay my true mediocre self.

Upon my request she used to bring me books to read. One of these was a

volume of Schopenhauer in which she showed me the following passage:

"To toil and to suffer in order to live. To live in order to toil and suffer."

Was this the sum total of life?

When she would leave me, a part of the light and the air would depart from my room. I would sink into a soft drowsiness, life would come to a stop, as it were, by her absence, and for hours I would wait for her return, with a feeling of wasting away, with no other wish in the world. From my window which took in the entire panorama of the Marmora, I used to keep gazing outside. All I wanted was the sick room I loved, with its plain white walls and its naked emptiness. To live in the proximity of this woman; this was my whole life's wish.

The doctors pronounced me completely recovered, and of a truth I was well again were it not for the disintegration of my soul just begun, a new kind of sickness which Sister Emily's piercing look had clearly discerned.

"My son," she would say to me, coming closer, "you must step outside, take in a little fresh air, take a little walk. It will do you good."

But I would stubbornly shut up myself in my room, not wishing to look at anyone else, to talk with anyone else, to waste my time in vain, when I could confine my thoughts to my dream. Inwardly, I admitted to myself that I was madly in love with this woman who was my nurse, whose nationality, her age, her nun's calling, and everything about her forbade me to put any hope in my heart. This manifest impossibility infuriated my love all the more. The deeper the chasm looked between us, the more I was tempted to plunge in. Mine was the dizziness which is induced by the gravity of the abysmal height.

During all this time it never entered my mind to utter a single word, or to give a

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slightest hint of the feeling which had awakened in my heart. The song of Arver was upon me, but she, more penetrating than the woman Arver loved, broached the subject most bravely:

"My son," she said to me one day as I was urging her to stay a little longer with me, "I have understood your secret. You are suffering from a foolish and impossible dream."

I was confused like a guilty boy.

"I am a Sister here and you are but a lad," she continued. "Thank God, you are wholly well now and you need no longer stay here. Especially, forget that childish dream of yours from which you suffer in vain."

Suddenly, I cast aside all my timidity.

"It is not something which I can throw out of my mind, it is deep in my heart," I replied earnestly.

And, as if I had said everything that was to be said, like a slightly covered wound which suddenly explodes, I poured out the entire accumulated weight of my suffering:

"Why do you wear so much perfection," I said vehemently, "if it is a sin to admire and love you? What do you gain by confining yourself in your solitude? Was it because of my wanting that I loved you? Never! And now I feel I am more seriously ill than the day I came here. And now you are chasing me away without a word of pity. I know you will tell me how absurd all this is. I have counted these reasons a thousand times. I swear I want nothing from you, not a thing. I was sick and I still am sick. Leave me to stay here without the hope of getting well, but at least without the certainty of death as well."

"You will die because you will be away from me?" She smiled bitterly. "Don't worry, you will not die. After you leave here, for about three days you will suffer, for about eight to ten days you will think

of me, in fifteen days you will have sufficiently recovered, and in a month I shall be only a memory, a sweet dim memory. Next year you will wonder that you ever loved me."

I made an emphatic negative gesture.

"I know those love intoxications," she stopped me. "They are like the foam of champagne which soon simmer down."

Suddenly she became transfigured, shedding off, as it were, the dignity of the Convent Sister, to make herself the most alluring, the most seductive, and the most desirable woman in the world, and said in a caressing voice:

"Because you are going to leave here tomorrow, and because you are such an agreeable fellow, or at least seem to be one, I will tell you plainly that I do not believe you love me. I have no faith in the love of all you men. I sacrificed my name, my family, my wealth, my youth of twenty years for the love of a youth who, like you, swore to love me to death but who deceived me. I rejected the hand of many noblemen, I did not listen to the importunities of my parents, and like a sneaking thief, one day I ran away to join my lover. My family disowned me but I did not mind it. I was happy with the youth who loved me. He was a bit worried at the blindness of my love and at first my heart was not poisoned with the arrow of suspicion. But later I noticed a trace of boredom in him, a kind of regret that he had joined me.

"Have you ever had a tall solid wall suddenly collapse over you, buried under the debris, lying there senseless and lifeless? And one day, laying aside all shame, my lover boy said to me: 'You must become reconciled with your parents. We cannot endure this poverty longer.'

"One year's poverty had dried up his inexhaustable love which was to have lasted until the grave. By this time my

last doubt vanished and I left him as one year before. I had left my parents, returning to him his freedom to deceive other women. But from that moment my heart turned into stone, I do not know whether it was the anguish or the idea of revenge which fortified my spirit, I vowed to forego all the pleasures of the world and I became a nun. Like one who gives alms to a poor man, I gave myself to the comforting of other people's pains at a time when I myself was sorely in need of comfort. And since it was not given to me to enjoy the world I dedicated myself to the happiness of others so that, by my self-denial others might enjoy the fulness of life.

"And yet, with all this, I had one joy left for me, one inner secret, a supreme joy which I shall have the courage of confessing to you. I do not wish to show myself better than I am. I deliberately chose the surgical cases and my wish was granted. As I administer to their wants I also become a spectator of men, namely, your suffering, as you roll in pain, I have the pleasure of listening to the terrible music of your moanings, your painful cries, and the ecstasy of your torture. I get a sort of satisfaction from this spectacle. I admit that this is a brutal and vengeful satisfaction. I have come here to hear your agonizing cries, your screams, your tortures. No other nurse would have the fortitude of enduring all this. They all congratulate me on my fortitude and courage but they do not know my secret. But when I am alone with my conscience, Ah . . ."

At this point Sister Emily's voice faltered.

"I hate myself. It is the thrill of this suffering which has made me an old woman when I am scarcely thirty."

Seeing I was silent, she continued: "Do you see now that I am not the woman of

your imagination? I am far from it, perhaps I am the exact opposite. I am not one to be loved, but a vengeful woman carrying the weight of my fate."

"All those things you have said detract nothing from my worship," I said with passion. "You are the most desirable being in my eyes and I am afraid you shall ever remain thus."

"Poor boy," she said.

Then she sweetly permitted me to hold her hand and take it to my lips.

"Tomorrow you leave here. Believe me it will be over in a few days. I brought you back to health like a sister, always suppose that I am your sister. And if you come this way once a year, drop in and see me."

After she left my room I do not know what she said to the Mother Superior. I only know this that the next day they decided that I should leave for good. I purposely delayed my preparations to leave, hoping that I would see her for the last time, but I could not see her. And, strangely enough, all her predictions came true. My fierce desire to see her gradually vanished, my daily preoccupations, the struggle of life, like all the rest of my heart's flowers, crushed and reduced to dust this dream too.

But the memory of Sister Emily ever remained with me, like a leaf pressed between the pages of a book, somewhat paled. Only this much, that as she had requested, one year later as I was strolling in the direction of Taksim quarters, I went to the hospital to inquire about her. Scarcely one month before she had been taken ill by an incurable disease and eight days later she had passed away.

"There was none like her, and there shall never be another like her," the Mother Superior said, shaking her head sadly.

This was the whole of her epitaph.

CHURCH MUSIC OF THE ARMENIANS

ROUBEN GRIGORIAN

This discussion of course has to do with the religious ritual and the accepted church music of the Armenians after their acceptance of Christianity as the state religion which, simultaneous with the extension of Christianity, its establishment, and particularly with the development of the Armenian Mass, has reached us in its perfected and enriched form.

Automatically the question arises: What happened to the music of the ritual which was dedicated to the gods in the pagan temples of the pre-Christian era? Was it lost. Did it vanish? Or were they incorporated into the Christian ritual? Unfortunately we have no proof or reference based on which we might be able to venture an opinion. We can only suppose the most probable.

Assuredly it would have been impossible to brush aside the pagan hymns in one stroke and replace them with Christian hymns. First, they could not have improvised Christian hymns all of a sudden, and even if they succeeded in improvising, it would have taken a long time to teach and generalize them. Such an accomplishment calls for the presence of specialists. Besides, the pagan ritual, so rich in melody and ceremonial sublimity would have a tremendous popular appeal, could not have been replaced by simple hymns which lacked splendor.

There had to be religious ceremonies which were spiced with music. Besides, as the first nation of history to adopt Chris-

tianity as the state religion, the Armenians could not have borrowed at once from the Greeks or the Byzantines because they too had not as yet formulated their new ritual. Although later, as result of the consolidation of Christianity and the mutual contact of co-religionist nations, much was borrowed from the outsiders, still Armenian music, religious and secular, did not escape the effect of foreign domination, such as the Arabs and the Persians.

Besides, there is the psychological aspect. It was not an easy task completely to eradicate the music of the pre-Christian era which had become part and parcel of the people. However, it could be adapted to the new religion. This method not only was possible, but it was practical, more than any other method. With all this, a close study of Armenian church music will show the following influences: Greek, Byzantine, partly Roman, and especially Arabic and Persian. At the same time, one encounters hymns which are unique, completely free of the abovementioned influences. The question arises: Perhaps these are pagan hymns which have been adapted to the Christian ritual, hymns which breathe the antiquity of the ages.

Makar Ekmalian, an indefatigable student of Armenian church music, writes in the introduction of his arrangement of the Armenian Mass: "Having borrowed from neighboring nations and from ancient pagan hymns, our ancestors laid the foundation of our church music."

Komitas Vardapet, the famous collector and composer of Armenian folk music, says in this connection: "Until the invention of the Armenian alphabet (the fifth century), the Armenian ritual consisted of the psalmody. How the psalmody was sung is not known; in all probability they used the ancient pagan tunes."

We know from history that after the invention of the alphabet when the Bible was translated into Armenian, the Armenian liturgy and the ritual gradually were developed; there came to the fore singers and scribes who composed the *Sharakans* (church hymns), to lend luster to the celebration of festivals, as well as to educate the people in regard to the meaning of these religious holidays. Thus, there came into existence the *Sharakans* which gradually replaced the psalmody.

The classification and the formulation of Armenian church music is ascribed to St. Sahak Parthev of whom Lazar of Pharbe writes: "He was well versed in musical notes," or "He perorated of the philosophical arts." With the steady enrichment of the Armenian Mass and the liturgy, naturally there came into existence new forms and new types of hymns, such as the so-called "tags" (verses) which portrayed the preachings of Christ and the lives of the saints. The so-called "Gandzer" (treasures), temporal wishes which, according to Komitas, "during the 14th and 15th centuries were sung over the dead, as their confession of sin and penitence over the vanities of the world." And the so-called "avetis" (tidings) whose subject matter is taken from the Bible and which correspond to the Anglo-Saxon Christmas carols.

Fifth century Armenian chroniclers, Korioun, Agathangelos, make mention of spiritual hymns which were sung at the time of the Holy Mass. Even Lazar of Pharbe makes mention of the "Sourb Astvatz" (Holy, Holy, Holy), while Sebeos speaks

of "Phark i bartzouns" (Glory in the Highest), all now a part of the Armenian liturgy. The greater part of the *Sharakans* are free verse imbued with powerful religious spirit. The content is based on the Christian faith, the mysteries of the church, and the saints who contributed to the extension of Christianity.

The greatest Armenian church luminary of the seventh century is Catholicos Komitas (after whose name Gevorg Soghomonian named the future famous composer, Komitas Vardapet), who worked on the improvement of the so-called musical "Jamma's" (rise and fall of the voice). The most popular of his works in his *Sharakan* dedicated to the Rhipsimé Virgins, entitled "Andsink Neviryal" (The dedicated persons) consisting of 36 verses after the number of the Armenian alphabet, each word beginning with a letter of the alphabetical order.

In the eighth century the Armenian liturgy was greatly enriched with new melodies and *Sharakans* written by Vahan Goghthnetzi and especially Stepannos Siunetzi who was a renowned musician and who studied in Athens, Constantinople and Rome. Stepannos Orbelian, the 13th century historian, says of Siunetzi: "He created powerfully melodic verses." And speaking of his sister Sahakadought, "She was exceedingly well versed in the musical art, who taught while seated under a canopy, and sang sweet melodies which Saint Marjam had composed in her name." According to Orbelian, Siunetzi "separated the eight notes and arranged them to melodious tunes to the blessings of the Holy Resurrection."

As early as the beginning of the fifth century the Armenian clergy already had settled the question of musical notes. The Armenian old and young translators who had studied in Greece had brought with them the Greek notes which they used in

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chanting the gospel, as well as to set the hymns to music. The first Gospel, thus put to notes, has come down to us from the ninth century (887 A.D.), together with punctuations. But the first Gospel with accents of clear enunciation (now in the archives of Etchmiadzin) was written in 998 A.D.

* * *

Armenian music reached the height of its development in the 11th and 12th centuries. The greatest contributor of this era was the great Armenian clergyman, justly called Nerses the Graceful. He worked hard to create typical Armenian church songs, to strip Armenian music of all Greek influence. Of him, the contemporary chronicler Samuel of Ani writes: "And albiet the words of his hymns were miraculous in their wisdom, yet all the more wonderful they were in the artistry of their melodic arrangement which he composed with unique originality, unlike one another."

It was through Nerses the Graceful that the question of rhythm in Armenian church music was recognized for the first time. He wrote the words of his hymns—masterful compositions—always with due regard to the rhythm.

Nerses the Graceful is the author of practically all the noted Sharakans now in use of the Armenian liturgy. These are used for all occasions, such as holidays, funerals, etc. Foremost among these are: *Ashkharh Amenayn* (The World Overall), *Aysor Anjar* (Today Ineffable), *Vardanantz Yev Ghevondiantz* (Of the Martyrs of Vardan and Ghevond), *Norasteghtzial* (Newly Born), *Hishestsouk* (Remember Ye), *Taratzial* (Extended), and *Nayyatz Sirov*, (He looked down lovingly). To him also are attributed the hymnals of *Arevakal* (The coming of the sun), sung during the season of Lent, which are among the most beautiful of Armenian church music.

As said, Nerses the Graceful successfully solved two major problems: First, he created typical Armenian hymnals, and second, he introduced the element of rhythm in church music. These two factors played a decisive role in the founding and the development of Armenian church music. Truly, Nerses the Graceful is one of outstanding pillars in Armenian musical architecture.

In the writings of Orbelian, Gandzaketzzi, and Tathevatzzi, 13th and 14th centuries, there is considerable mention of hymns and Sharakans. Gandzaketzzi says it was Khachatour Taronatzzi who "introduced notes, gave body to the tunes, spread them in our land, and taught it to many."

We know very little or nothing about the development of Armenian music from the latter half of the 18th century to the beginning of the 19th century. We can only surmise that, from the beginning of the 17th century the meaning of notes began to be distorted and soon became impractical (although the copyists carefully preserved the notes, without being familiar either with their meaning or their role). We know this much that the rich Amiras of Istanbul, patrons of Armenian church music, patronized and supported a few singers who, according to Komitas, "did their best to excell one another with their arbitrary warblings and thus considerably vitiated the former simplicity of the tunes."

In 1818, the Greeks of Istanbul, to save their music from extinction, called a conference to create a new system of musical notes, and to set anew their music to notes. This event spurred the Armenians to do likewise. The singer Hambartoum Limonjian (1768-1839), utilizing the old notes, invented a new system of composition which he called by Arabian names, a probable adaptation to Arabo-Persian gamut of seven. Limonjian and a few other traditionally inclined singers recomposed the

tunes which they approved. The first trial belongs to Limonjian. The year of his death he composed his doxology of Holy Easter, *Aysor Haryav* (Today He Rose) but his premature death prevented him from continuing his work. The second attempt belongs to Hambartzoom Charchian of whom singer Yeghia Tntesian has written: "More or less, his was a daring attempt to revise our tunes on the Turkish pattern."

Following the example of the Greeks, in 1873 (April 22) a special committee of 14 was appointed consisting of qualified singers, scribes and clergymen, to assemble, select, revise and to recompose the Armenian church hymnals. Incidentally, 10 of this committee defected for various reasons, leaving the work to the remaining four: Tntesian, Nicolaus Tashjian, Aris-takes Hovhanessian, and Gabriel Yeranian. To start with, this committee of four decided to examine the best of Tntesian's arrangements of the Sharakans and to take steps to publish them. At the same time Tntesian and Tashjian were doing their utmost to introduce the use of the organ in churches but Patriarch Poghos Taktakian would not permit it.

The same year Catholicos Gevorg IV, the founder of the Gevorgian Seminary (jemaran) of Etchmiadzin, invited Nicolaus Tashian to Etchmiadzin along with a number of authorities on the Sharakans. He made them sing the Sharakans, made comparisons, selected the best among them, himself learned to sing, and he ordered Nicolaus Tashjian to set them to music.

The first thought was the preparation of a composition text book, published in 1874, to enable the priests and the singers to read the compositions of the Sharakans. The result was the publication of two text books: *Sharakan Dsaynagryal* (Sharakans with notes), and *Dsaynagryal Yerget-zoghoutyoune Serpo Pataraki* (The music of the Holy Mass with notes).

In the year of 1877 the Mekhitarist Order made the first attempt to introduce the arrangement of the Holy Mass with European notes, the work being done by Pietro Biancini. The title of the book is "Hymns of the Holy Mass of the Armenian Church."

Next came Emin Abgar, an Iranian Armenian from Calcutta, India, with his work entitled *Patarakamatouytz* (The Composition of the Holy Mass of the Armenian Apostolic Church). This work had a second edition in 1920. The third was the work of Makar Yegmalian, the *Patarak* (Mass) adapted for male or mixed quartets, published in 1896 at the expense of Grigor Meghvinian, Leipzig-Vienna, in a deluxe edition. It is this *Patarak* which is used in Armenian churches to this day.

Makar Yekmalian was born in 1857 in Vagharshapat. He was one of those who had been invited by the Armenian Catholicos to study the question of revising the Armenian church music. Being an adept student, he soon became very useful to Nicolaus Tashjian in the recomposition of the Sharakans. This fact attracted the Catholicos' attention who immediately sent Yekmalian to the Petersburg Conservatory of Music for his advanced education. The peasant lad from Armenia with the sharp sense for hearing and his innate talent soon attracted the attention of Rubenstein and Tchaikowsky, despite the fact that at the time he had only a smattering knowledge of the Russian language. He graduated with honors in 1887 and returned to Tiflis where he was invested with the office of director of the Imperial Conservatory of Music. By this time his benefactor, the Catholicos had died, and Yekmalian, to show his gratitude, was determined to continue the work begun by the great Catholicos at all cost.

While studying in Petersburg, Yekmalian already had started work on the composition of the Armenian *Patarak*. Working

zealously day and night, finally he finished the work and submitted it to the Council of the Conservatory in Petersburg, as well as to the director of the Church choir of the Imperial Palace. Both these institutions found the work of good composition, melodious, highly suitable for use in the churches, and worthy of high recommendation (January, 1893).

Two years of trial of the new liturgy (Patarak) in the Cathedral of the Monastery of Tiflis convinced both the author and anyone else of the beauty, the charm, and the excellence of the composition. Thereupon Yekmalian appealed to Catholicos Khrimian who, in his Pastoral Letter of June 7, 1895, recommended it for general use "for the edification and the illumination of the Armenian Church." The new Patarak was published in 1896 and immediately was adopted by all Armenian churches.

Stricken by mental depression in 1902, after three years of suffering, Yekmalian finally died on March 5, 1905 in extreme misery, in a poor hut in the outskirts of the city quarters called Havlabar.

Without doubt Yekmalian's work was a distinguished achievement yet it was weak in one respect. In the Preface of his Patarak Yekmalian writes: "We have endeavored to make the harmony of this work as simple as possible, because such is the requirement of the spirit of the Arabo-Persian music of which ours is a part." Later, Komitas not only refuted this theory but he purged the new Patarak which he composed of all Arabic and Persian influence.

Speaking of Yekmalian's work Komitas says, "Although the harmony is simple, nevertheless it sounds beautiful." Again, "Yekmalian planted the first rose garden of harmony in the wilderness of our barren music."

In our opinion Yekmalian's composition was largely influenced by the composition of Russian church music, whereas Komitas'

creation lays the whole stress on the Armenian spirit in point of both purity and composition.

The music of Komitas Vardapet's Armenian Patarak is a beautiful and highly valuable achievement which was arranged by Vardan Sarkissian and was published for the first time in 1933 in Paris. Komitas' original was intended for male Trio which Sarkissian converted into a mixed tritett choir. It is a pity that it was not also adapted for the accompaniment of the organ which would have facilitated its use in churches.

In 1940 when the late Catholicos Garegin was Prelate of the Armenian Diocese, an anthology was published entitled "Sharakans and Hymns" which included the Pataraks composed by Yekmalian, Komitas and Siuni. From its introduction we learn that the late Catholicos Khoren who in his youth was choirmaster of Yekmalian's choir in the Monastery of Tiflis, copied Yekmalian's Sharakans and his unpublished works, carefully preserved them, and later turned them over to Catholicos Garegin for future publication. This anthology includes Komitas' *Aysor Dsaynn Hayrakan* (This Day the Patriarchal Voice) and *Ov Zarmanali* (O Wondrous). The work also includes Grigor Siuni's adaptation of these Sharakans as well as *E Verin Yerousaghem* (To Jerusalem on High). This work is the best medium to compare the three masters and to be convinced of Komitas' superiority.

From an article of the noted scholar Stepan Malkhassian (Hask, 1949-50, Antilias, Lebanon) we learn that the present Catholicos, Gevorg VI, has a quartet Patarak of his own composition which was approved by the Director of Moscow Conservatory of Music in 1916.

In recent years Onnik Berberian and Father Srabion have been tempted to present the Armenian Patarak in symphonic

and choral programs. I had occasion to see the latter's printed score in Paris, a comprehensive and serious work which marks an added step in the onward march of Armenian music. The Iranian Armenian composer Ashot Patmagrian is another who arranged a number of Sharakans. A source of rich material for research study is the collection of Father Hacop Mikhjian, entitled "Hymns and Sharakans, Verses, and Melodies of the Armenian Holy Apostolic Church," which need study, selection, purification from external influences, and rearrangement, collected and carefully preserved, worthy of high appreciation and gratitude. A similar work is Nerses Khudaverdian's "Arevakal," for solo voice, published in 1929 in Istanbul.

The American Armenian composer Alan Hovhannes has successfully arranged the "Four Tjashou Sharakans," as well as "The Prayer of St. Nerses." The latter in particular is a most beautiful work. Father Gevond Tayian, a Mekhitarist Father, is now rendering a valuable service in the

accurate harmonization of the Sharakans, through the application of the quarter note graded system. It is to be hoped that he shall not encounter any difficulties of composition, in such an event the use of the counter-point style will be most useful.

Perhaps there are others who are busy with similar problems who unfortunately are unknown to us. The indisputable fact is the Armenian church music is in a process of steady growth and perfection, at times sluggish, and at times with increased tempo. In recent years, as a result of the international political situation, this burden has developed on the shoulders of Armenian communities in the dispersion. None of the musicians of Soviet Armenia has busied himself with religious music during the past thirty or more years. We fondly hope the chains which have shackled the people of Armenia shall soon be lifted and Armenian composers shall be free once again to resume in the fatherland the further development of the glorious Armenian music so ably begun by the masters.



Two Poems:

P. K. THOMAJAN

CONFESSIONS OF AN EX-CONTACT MAN

Champagne has launched many a campaign.

Corona Coronas have smoked out precious potentials.

*Those fat melons are plucked off well-irrigated
grapevines.*

*What is advertising but sheer switchery . . . an adroit
detour de force . . . assailsmanship.*

*Twixt the terrific and the terrible is merely a matter
of . . . a hair and a dare.*

*It's jocular jugglery . . . placing scintillating
notions in a state of commotion . . . agitating
acquisitive reflexes.*

*There's no hoi-polloitering when the desire-baited
mob is stampeded.*

*This prestige prestidigitation demands a very special
brand of quack magic.*

It's brainstorming one's way with crack-witted fancies.

*Polishing off contacts has a glittering facetiquette
all its own.*

The right alma mater can matter so very much.

There's nothing like a smart club to make a killing.

A show-off is a piker compared to a displayboy.

Observe how that pretty mite morsells herself.

Chick-Salesmanship clicks.

*Galivanting and galvanizing must have a blandishing
blend.*

Pressure must be applied with the utmost urgentness.

*Getting those dotted lines properly decorated can reduce
one to a semi-coma.*

*What a chore . . . building up client's egos . . . making
them feel I-gantic.*

*18-carat corn alloyed with pure brass . . . that's the
alchemic formula.*

Alas, what a hand-to-myth existence!



RABBLE ROUSERS

Ornate crackpots filled with a wilted floweriness

O-rators with accent on zero

*Silver-tongued porcupines who can make a whole platform
out of a chip-on-the-shoulder*

*Demagogues who dispense semi-truths and drive home
rusty thoughts into wooden noodles*

*Philossified boneheads who labor to build dreamansions
with broken-down theories*

*Breezily they air out their foggy ideas and leave
transient converts in murky mists*

*Flannel-mouths whose shoddy blanket statements always
fall short of covering those left out in the cold*

*Boob-baiters who lionize mouses and snare them
with cats-in-the-bag*

*Froth-faced fanatics whose consuming obsession is
to foment cataleptic dogmas*

RABBLE ROUSERS . . . MESSY MESSIAHS
who glibly salve problems but never solve them!

RENE GROUSSET

K. GUZALIAN

Rene Grousset, one of the greatest historians of our times, passed away on September 12, 1952, in Paris. With his passing France lost one of her noblest sons who had enriched French historiography with his invaluable works, while the Armenians lost a sincere friend who understood and appreciated the contribution of that people to world civilization better than many.

Grousset was not a mere historian. His exploring mind was never satisfied with the mere enumeration of historical events and facts or the determination of cause and sequence. Under the events and facts he always sought a meaning, a purpose. To him, history was not a plaything of forces superior to us, or above us, but the work of living, active, feeling, and purposeful human actors. He rejected the entire thesis of historical materialism which seeks to interpret human history in the light of external forces . . . the constantly changing course of productive means. The materialistic view together with the biological school of sociology have tended to kill the historical reality and to divest it of its vital and living diversity.

Grousset not only studied what puts meaning into events, what and how the countless generations of the past have created, but he tried to understand the essence of the giant movement which one specie of the biological world, the higher and better developed man, accomplished in the course of thousands of centuries. Where is mankind headed for? What

awaits mankind in the immediate and distant future?

As a dispassioned objective historian he has recorded the work of past generations, the good and the bad, the rise and the decline, the struggle of spiritual forces against the supremacy of matter, the triumph of human instinct over rationalism. The historian is a mere recorder. The study of the past in this manner is a great task and to abstain from approaching the events with biased mind is a great virtue; but the historian does not always confine himself to the strictures of this rule. He often emerges from this circle and invades other boundaries which do not belong to the historian but to the philosopher. The historian becomes the philosopher. He not only sees the fact, describes and reasons it, but he evaluates it. The philosopher-historian has his yardstick for appraising the history. He is like the traveler who tours the universe, who has trekked a long journey, and now thinks of the roads he has crossed. He reflects upon what he has seen and experienced on the road, and tries to penetrate their meaning and to rationalize them.

In the latter part of his life Grousset became a philosopher. His mind had traversed vast distances, he had wandered in the whole of the East, he had meandered all the corners of Asia, he had brought to light the greatest characters of the East, he had described the history-making events, the wars. He had made meditations on the arts, the search for ideas,

the great religious teachings and the ethical systems of the old and new worlds. He followed in his mind the adventures of the "Steppe empires," the ruin of civilizations and the disappearance of values which had been created by countless generations. He suffered as he viewed the ideological and moral downfall of the so-called "civilized mankind," the triumph of machine over man, the loss of man's freedom, the supremacy of totalitarian teaching, and the deification of the greatest criminals of history.

Grousset writes his meditations only after he has passed through a world so great, created by the arduous toil of generations, and with a background of long centuries. These views in regard to world history, the active forces, the leading characters, the religions, the arts, the aims men have pursued and the hopes they have cherished, pertaining to the immediate and distant future, the philosopher-historian has recorded in two volumes which bear the traces of deep living, faith and conviction, and constitute a great ethico-philosophical legacy bequeathed by the historian to the youth and to future generations. By this, he becomes a prophet-historian. His entire philosophy is idealistic; it is the spirit which guides us. It is the triumph of the spirit which Grousset prophesies, the historian who has seen and described so many crimes in history. This is a great moral power which the great historian reveals. The foundation of his idealism is Christianity which is the religion of great virtue. The entire civilization of the West has two sources: the Greek and the Christian. The history and the culture of Europe is the synthesis of these two sources. Christianity is not a religion of the past but still a living, guiding spiritual force. It is the plan of regeneration and progress. Grousset was a Christian in the best sense of the word.

To him Christianity was both religion and the totality of morality. Both those, the religion and the ethics, are like a shining beacon through the darkness of history, showing mankind the way, and leading it along the path of freedom and brotherhood.

Rene Grousset is the historian of the East, the historian of Asia, to be precise. In the broadest sense of the word. He has written the history of Asiatic nations who played a definite role or created definite values. Some of them are great political and military actors. Along with these he also has included the Armenians whose history he has closely linked with those of the neighboring nations. However, the conclusions he has drawn about the Armenians are different. In his voluminous work he has devoted many chapters to the Armenians but his greatest contribution in his imposing work entitled "*Histoire de l'Arménie*" published in 1947. The 640 page volume covers the history of the Armenians from its beginnings to 1071 A.D.

As a historian, Rene Grousset explores the political facts; to him history first of all is the texture of political events, the description of the facts. In this texture are seen the social forces, history making characters, fundamental social aims and tendencies, religious and emancipatory movements and struggles. And because he is primarily interested in facts, his works are replete with them. Withal, Grousset is not merely the historian of political events nor a describer of mere facts. The political facts are the external events which have taken place in the history of peoples; they create a certain atmosphere in which to live, to think and to create. There are facts which are intricately linked with the internal life of peoples, with their mind and heart, their sufferings, and their moral concepts. All human creative work, the arts, religion, philosophy and literature

are the product of this psycho-intellectual dynamism. It would be wrong to say that, by describing the political evolution of peoples, Grousset forgets their spiritual creativity. Never. It seems, to weave better his texture, for the sake of convenience he has separated man's spiritual achievements by devoting to them separate volumes. He has devoted two volumes to the history of philosophy of India, the sculpture of India and China, the arts of the Far East, and the religion of Byzantium. Another three volumes he has devoted to "Eastern Arts," the first to the arts of the Near East, and the other two to the arts of India and the Far East. In these volumes he has connected in concise form religion with the arts, generally basing the latter on religion.

His works are mutually complementary, giving a composite picture of the political and spiritual forces of eastern peoples. We might say no other European historian has done so much to introduce the history of Asiatic peoples to Europe as did Grousset. And this labor, some several tens of volumes, he has accomplished not with haste, with a light acquaintance with his subject, but after long and arduous study of his sources. As a result of his profundity he had become an authority on the history of the East in French historiography.

After World War I French historiography took on a new impetus, there began a series of "collection" publications on nations and civilizations. Rene Grousset was invited to take part in all these "collective" enterprises, his assignment being the writing of the history of eastern nations. After the war, Gustave Klotz, a professor of the University of Paris and authority on ancient Greece was made head of the series which came under the heading of "General History" whose publisher was "Presses Universitaires de France."

This series was to consist of fifty massive volumes. To date only 26 volumes have been published of this series. Grousset's contribution to this series was "The History of Eastern Asia," the tenth volume of the series devoted to the Middle Ages. It comprises the histories of India, China, the Mongol Empire, the Indo-Chinese Islands and the history of Japan, from their origins to the 15th century. The ninth volume of the series is entirely devoted to Europe having for its axis the history of Byzantium from 1081 to 1453. The editor of this volume was the noted authority on Byzantium, Charles Tilly.

In this volume Grousset has given the "History of the Latin East" which is the history of the Crusades. Here, in their essential outlines are given the histories of the Latin principalities established in Syria, Palestine, Cyprus and Greece, one chapter being devoted to "The Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia."

In another collection entitled "Peoples and Civilizations," consisting of twenty volumes and likewise the work of the abovementioned publishing house, Grousset has contributed to the first volume, outlining the migrations of Indo-European peoples and the states they established until the 12th century B.C. In the second volume he has given the history of the settlements of the Indians, the Scythians and the Seleucians in Middle Asia and Iran.

A third collection entitled "Histoire du Monde" under the editorship of Professor Jaques Marie Eugene Cavaignac of the University of Strasburg includes a large volume by Grousset on the "Mongol Empire." Grousset also was invited to contribute two volumes to the series entitled "L'Evolution de l'humanite," under the editorship of the great savant H. Bern. This collection was designed to consist of one hundred volumes but only fifty volumes have been published to date. Due

to illness and lack of time, Grousset was unable to fulfill his assignment and the volumes devoted to China and India were written by others.

Besides his participation in these collections, Grousset contributed three large volumes to the Historical Collection of the famous Payeaux Publishing House, the result of arduous labor. In 1938 he published "L'Empire des Steppes," a great work, devoted to the three great Turanian conquerors, Attila, Chengiz Khan and Timurlane. This is an ambitious work with a wide scope. The scene is Central Asia, the social life of its peoples, the succeeding predatory peoples, their migrations, the gradual reassembly of the forces and their invasions on neighboring fertile countries and their sedentary peoples. The steppes and the desert are a scourge to the fertile valleys. The struggle between these two is the big chapter in the history of eastern peoples. The Turanian tribes, the nomads of the steppes, have been such a scourge to China, India, Iran and the entire Near East, even Europe. In the fifth century Attila's hordes invaded as far as the land of the Franks and reached the gates of Paris. If their invasion of Europe was unsuccessful, the Turanian tribes were more successful in Asia. They became firmly entrenched in China and the Middle East where they established dynasties, tried to share the civilization of the conquered peoples, built powerful states, tried to introduce law and order, to contribute to the economy of the land and to insure security of person and property. The two modes of life, the nomad and the sedentary, have a geographical basis: the fatherland of one are the waterless sandy lands, devoid of vegetation, dismal and monotonous, the occupation animal husbandry; for the other, the irrigated lands, the stationary life, and the wealth accumulated by the toil of centuries, material and spiritual. The nomad, the dweller

of the steppes, becomes dangerous for the settled man when he assembles his scattered forces, and led by a talented leader, emerges from the steppes and becomes the master of great trade routes, the road of the caravans. He creates a "steppe empire." But these do not last long, they soon collapse, leaving behind, hither and yon, their traces. The only trouble is that their rule, at times lasting for centuries, leaves a deep impress on the social system, the mode of life, the arts and the thought of the conquered peoples.

Rene Grousset's second highly interesting work, "L'Empire du Levant," is an ambitious project. It is the history of the Eastern Question. According to Grousset, the eastern question is not of recent origin, it does not belong to the 18-19th centuries and is not related to the decline of the Ottoman Empire nor to the renaissance of the subject Christian nations. It is as old as the contacts between the East and the West. Incidentally, we might say that this view of the eastern question is quite widespread in Armenian historiography. In his two volume work devoted to this subject, Professor H. Thoumayan starts his history from the Perso-Greek wars in the fifth century B.C. Leo, likewise, consider the eastern question the result of the clash between Europe and Asia. These two worlds are unique political and spiritual concepts, mutually exclusive and contradictory. The representative of one was Greece, the other, Persia. Such a conception converts the whole of history into the eastern question, depriving the latter of its unique, characteristic aspects.

Grousset, too, is a proponent of this antithesis between Europe and Asia as regards the Eastern Question. What is Europe? It is the synthesis of those countries which have inherited the Greek civilization. According to Grousset there is a European spirit, a culture, whose first

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intelligencer and the creator was the Greek people. It reached its maturity in Athens in the fifth century B.C. It opposed the Asiatics on the field of Marathon, in the Battle of Salamis. In these battles it was the freedom which was being defended, the freedom of the Greek city states. In this struggle for freedom was developed the Greek genius—"The Greek Miracle"—which was the first expression of the European esprit.

From this time the boundaries of Europe were extended. In the West she built the Roman Empire under the Latin cloak which by degrees included the Mediterranean peoples. Christianity, although of Asiatic origin, is European in ideal and spirit, and it became so thanks to the order which was created by the Roman Empire. Christianity brought into its sphere of influence the Germanic peoples, thus expanding the European idea. Two genius minds, Alexander of Macedon and Julius Caesar, opened new horizons before the Greco-Roman civilization. Alexander extended the Greek culture as far as Middle Asia, the Plain of Indus. The whole of the Middle East was Hellenized. It was here that the Greek way of life took root, the Greek language was expanded, the Greek intellectual search was developed anew, and the eastern religions were remodeled.

Naturally, under the new circumstances, the Greek civilization itself was subjected to the influence of the East. Under the pressure of this influence the freedom and the autonomy of the Greek city states was eliminated and the Hellenic states proceeded along the eastern model of absolute monarchy. Julius Caesar grafted the new form of Greek civilization—the Latin form—on Gaul whose multifold tribes he unified into a new life. Julius Caesar tilted the axis of European history from the Mediterranean into western Europe and found a new world for the Latin civiliza-

tion in Gaul, Great Britain, and the shores of the Rhine. Christianity continued the interrupted work by extending the Latin form to the Germanic tribes. In this task Charles the Great played a great role. He was one of the creators of Europe.

But these new conquests in Europe raised new forces against them in Asia by contributing to the awakening of the Asiatic peoples and later to their aggression. Europe's boundaries in the east were crowded and gradually narrowed. India, the Middle Asiatic countries, Bactria were the first to shed off the influence of Hellenic civilization. The Parthians, although called "hellenophiles" but in reality "barbarians" were the ones to strike the first blow and to throw out "Europe" from the Iranian plateau. "Under the last Seleucid dynasty, during the entire duration of the Roman Empire and the first two centuries of the Byzantine Empire. 129 B.C. to 640 A.D. the Euphrates was the dividing line between the Greco-Roman and eastern civilizations." To the west of this line, in Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt, the Hellenic civilization continued to linger. The seventh century marked the beginning of the gigantic struggle between Asia and Europe. This fight was headed by the Arabs. Mohammedanism was Asia's protest, the struggle against Christianity which is Europe, the religion of Europe. Asia was victorious and threatened the existence of the Byzantine Empire. She encircled Europe. In 717 her armies and fleet besieged Constantinople, in 732 the Arabs entered Gaul, endangering Europe from the west. But in this struggle Europe emerged victorious although she was too exhausted to resist Asia. Asia always stood at her gates. The same Asia once again took the offensive under the leadership of Turanian peoples and became established in the Near East, in eastern Europe, and in Africa in the days of the Ottoman Turks. Europe's counter attack during the

centuries of the crusades to repel the Turk, to liberate the Near East and to unite it with European civilization was a failure.

Rene Grousset delineates in detail the various stages of the Eastern Question, beginning from its origins to the 16th century, until after centuries of struggle, the Turks took a firm hold of the Balkans, southeast of Europe. In this great eastern drama the Crusades constitute an important operation, busying Europe and Asia for three centuries. Rene Grousset has devoted a magnificent chapter to this great drama, his three massive volumes of "Histoire des Croisades," 1935-1938, published by the Plon Publishing House. This work transcends the story of the crusades. In a wider sense it is the story of the Near East. The theater of this great drama is Syria, Palestine, the Byzantine Empire, Egypt, Cilicia and the Mediterranean Islands. The acting characters are the elite of the French nobility, the Italian city states, the German emperors, the magnificent Byzantine court with its emperors, the Seljuk Turk Amiras of the Near East, the Sultans, the great or small conquerors.

There is a vast amount of factual material in this book on the battles, the diplomatic relations, commercial ties, cultural influences, heroic fights and secret plottings. After painting the elaborate picture, the great historian gives the conclusion—the gift of this centuries old struggle to Europe and Asia, the mutual penetrations, the mutual understanding. He lingers long on the role of the French people. It was France which in the Middle Ages planted the seed of European civilization in the East.

In this historic world struggle Rene Grousset also includes the history of the Armenians always bearing in mind the Armenian contribution to the arts and culture and the role the Armenians played in this rivalry between Europe and Asia.

Rene Grousset regards the Armenians as a European people although planted in Asia, to the east of the Euphrates line. Christianity is a European religion which embodies the spiritual wealth of Europe; the Armenian, as a Christian, is the European of the East. He has given considerable space to the story of the eastern European. In his work "The Latin East" he has devoted a chapter to the history of the Cilician Kingdom. In his work on the Eastern Question he has devoted many pages to the role the Armenians played in the fights between Europe and Asia, always lining up with Europe. Finally he wrote his "History of the Armenians," a work which is unique among non-Armenian language publications.

The study of the history of the Armenians occupies a prominent place in French historiography. In the middle of the last century took place the translation into French of the Armenian historians series with comprehensive explanatory notes; this was followed by the publication of medieval Armenian documents. The period of the Cilician Kingdom in particular occupies a large place in French historiography. Only after this preliminary labor was the publication of synthetic works begun.

In 1900 Father Tournabize published his highly valuable book "The Political and Religious History of Armenia." This was followed by Jacques de Morgan's "The History of the Armenian People," published at the expense of the Armenian Delegation to the Paris Peace Conference, to acquaint the outsiders with the cultural achievements of Armenia. The author is a great student of ancient history, has been in Armenia where he made a number of excavations; however, his history is imperfect, brief, and hastily written. It is regrettable that this work, written thirty-five years ago, and so imperfect, has

been translated into English and Armenian in the United States. If an English translation was necessary it was easy to find a much better work. There are Armenian books highly more valuable, even if published in Soviet Armenia, which could have been reprinted.

For the Armenians of abroad Grousset's work is the third, published at the end of World War II, with the identical aim of arousing interest in the Armenian Question. Independently of this primary aim, the great historian's book is the best work on the history of the Armenians which has been published in a foreign language during the past 40-50 years. As in all his other historical works, Grousset in this book has given a comprehensive and detailed account of the political history of the Armenians. With this aim, he has made use of all the sources which have been translated into European languages. The author is not familiar with the Armenian language, but he has availed himself extensively of Armenian sources which have been translated into English, French and German languages. He also has made use of all contemporary historical works in European languages.

Grousset has traced the history of the Armenians as far as 1071 A.D., the advent of the Seljuk Turks in Armenia. Grousset looks upon Armenian history as an arena in which the East and the West, Asia and Europe are at rivalry. Armenia has suffered from this rivalry, has been ruined, her civilization has received a severe blow, the people have been persecuted in the name of Christianity. Armenia has been unable to create a large dynasty, a great military force against the enemy. Her impediments have been the long mountain ranges, especially the rivalries of the princes. Europe has not helped the Armenians. In their resistance against the external enemy they always have been

alone: Byzantium has exploited the question of religious creed instead of strengthening it, instead of raising the Armenian spirit of resistance, has debilitated the Armenian political power, has dispersed the vital elements of Armenia. By doing this, she has hurt herself.

Rene Grousset regards Christianity as the basis of the Armenian cultural movement, as well as the basis of their national consciousness. He opposes the Armenians with the Sassanians. But the stupid policy of Byzantium forced the Armenians to secede from the church and to found their national church.

Alongside the political history, Grousset gives a broad outline of the cultural and religious movements in Armenia. As a devout Christian, he assigns to religion a great role in the history of nations. He has described this influence in his works devoted to the arts; as to the influence of religion on the political fortunes of Armenia, he has described it extensively in his "History of the Armenian People."

For example, to him the story of the Vardanantz War is a religious fight waged for the freedom of conscience. He does not reject the social and political causes of that struggle, but he gives first place to religion.

Rene Grousset did not introduce a new theory in the study of Armenian history. He proceeded along the European Armenology which he had developed; he did not develop a new system, but remaining loyal to the old historiography he produced the best work for foreign readers. He was unfamiliar with the new Armenology of Soviet Armenia which gives new answers to many questions. He is not familiar with the works of Professor Marr, especially his latter theories, is not acquainted with the researches of Professor N. Adontz and H. Manandian devoted

to the social phase of Armenian history. In the works of Rene Grousset there is no Armenian common class, there is always

the Armenian State. But we should be grateful to the great historian for what he has done for the Armenians.

YOU'LL BE THERE

*Some day,
a cold winter day,
when my bones will be old and tired,
I shall dip my hands into the treasure chest
of dusty old days . . .*

*And you'll be there,
with the pearl and gold
and the silver chain of long-forgotten days.
You'll be there with them . . .*

*I shall dip my hands
and touch every bead and stone
and maybe the sharp point of a gemmed arrow
will pierce my shaky hand
and an old wound will bleed again . . .*

*Maybe a drop of blood
will paint a diamond red,
a diamond as pure as a maiden's tear
shed for a first or last love . . .*

*And the diamond may glitter
with the caress of life
and sparks of never-dying love
may for a moment hide the remaining gems
from my failing eyes . . .*

*Yes . . .
you will be there,
glittering among dusty pearl and gold
and the silver chain of ever forgotten days;
you'll shine there among them . . .*

but no more with them . . .

TATUL SONENTZ

GEORGE MAGAR MARDIKIAN

ROUBEN CAVOOR

"The discovery of a new dish does more for the happiness of mankind than the discovery of a star."—BRILLAT SAVARIN

The success story of George Magar Mardikian, who was awarded the Medal of Freedom by the President of the United States of America for his volunteer war service as Food Consultant to the United States Army along the Korean battlefronts, reads like an eastern fable. His story is woven from the warp of imagination, initiative and individual effort in America and the woof of starvation, beatings and imprisonment by Turkish invaders. While an Armenian soldier and yet a boy, his life was saved by friendly Americans, who aided his escape from a Turkish prison camp. These same friendly Americans helped him come to America. His first job was that of a dishwasher in a San Francisco restaurant and rapid promotions, because of a conscientious attitude and a deep capacity for learning, elevated him to the position of chef. In the intervening years, he established Omar Khayyam's Restaurant in Fresno and then moved it to San Francisco to the location of his first job in America, where it is today. Through the advent of quality food, he has become the friend of patrons from around the world. During the United Nations Conference, he served as volunteer chef and host to delegates and press representatives from around the world.

During World War II he accepted the responsibility conferred upon him by the

Quartermaster General of the United States Army to visit the front line army camps and outpost stations to see and try the army rations and to plan for the improvement of food and service to maintain the physical strength and the natural mental keenness of American soldiers facing front line dangers.

He tells us of his arrival in America:

"When I first came to America as a young man of twenty, fresh from the horrible wars in the Near East, from murder and torture, I knew what it meant at first hand to be starved and frozen and left for dead in the snow of Winter. And when I escaped these tortures and came to America, it was like coming to a second Heaven, where dreams could be made to come true.

"My first Heaven was my childhood memories of old Armenia. I remember my first glimpse of Mount Ararat, which is the most majestic sight any native Armenian can see. Across a hot valley and far up into the sky the snow-covered twin peaks rise nearly 17,000 feet. This mountain was the legendary resting place of Noah's Ark. I shall never forget it.

"But the greatest thrill of my life was when as an immigrant boy I saw the Statue of Liberty, while I stood on the deck of the steamer, as we sailed into New York harbor. Here was relief from torture and heartbreak, and I felt it with all my heart. At that moment, I decided to leave behind all hatred and bitterness and to begin life anew. Like the many wonderful things we had heard about America in Armenia,

the Statue of Liberty seemed to symbolize them all that day.

"When we arrived at Ellis Island, the Immigration Officer gave us soap and bade us take a shower—that shower seemed to wash away the ugliness of the world."

Proud and grateful for his American citizenship, and for the opportunity which it gave to him to build a new life, his one thought and ambition is to spread the gospel of Americanism everywhere he goes, whether at home or abroad.

In Collier's Weekly, Frank J. Taylor writes of him:

"Armenia is a country where you never ask 'What's cooking?' because you already know that it is lamb in some form or another.

"In fact, Armenians have such a healthy respect—and relish—for that animal, that they even cook the tail. In that country, through ages of breeding, the shepherds have evolved lambs with fat, meaty, toothsome tails, so heavy and unweildy that toy trailers are sometimes hitched behind the animals to keep them from dragging on the ground . . ."

He was born in Babert, Armenia, on November 7, 1902. He was christened George Magar, the youngest of four children of Magar and Haikanoush (Amirian) Mardikian. His father was a wealthy commission merchant. Among his ancestors were teachers, soldiers, and revolutionary leaders. His mother was the daughter of the head of an Armenian tribe, many of whom were massacred by the Turks in 1895. For the most part, he was reared in Constantinople and attended school in Scutari. Induced by an inner urge for justice for his countrymen, he ran away from school at the age of fifteen and joined an Armenian *feydayi* (guerilla) force.

After the Turks recognized Armenia's independence, George Mardikian returned to Constantinople and enjoyed a brief per-



GEORGE M. MARDIKIAN

iod of peaceful interlude. This much needed rest period gave him the opportunity to organize local orphans into a Boy Scout troop. "He rejoices today in an honorary scoutmastership of the Boy Scouts of America." He loves to banquet the boy scouts and often has.

When Turkey and Russia joined hands and decided to carve up the budding Armenian Republic between themselves, Mardikian returned to his country's service as an infantryman. Because of the betrayal of Communist fifth columnists, he was captured together with a majority of his outfit. With the allied commission standing by, the Turks dared not butcher them outright, instead they set them to chopping ice on the river. After each day's rigorous labors, they herded them into an unheated and dilapidated warehouse, and kept them nearly frozen and half-starved. After twenty-eight days of this indescribable misery, young George Mardikian escaped with the aid of an American who lent him a Near East Relief uniform as a disguise. "It took a chain of such sympathizers to smuggle him out of the country altogether."

By this time he had definitely decided

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that his future lay in the United States, where a brother and sister were already established. Before leaving, however, he wished to spend a few precious moments with his beloved mother in Constantinople. Though this visit nearly cost him his life, he feels it was worth it. He boarded a Greek steamer bound for New York one hour before the Turks arrived at his home to recapture him. This was in June, 1922.

Like most of his fellow countrymen, he fell in love with America on sight. He considers his life since then as "the perfect flowering of Americanization." On his visits to New York, he makes it a point to revisit the Statue of Liberty, which is to him the noblest sight on earth. On the occasion of a trip several years ago, a friend writes of him:

"He stood there gazing up at it in rapt wonder and reciting from memory the words graven inside its base: 'Bring me your poor, your huddled masses . . .' A crowd gathered, and by the time he had finished, most of them were mopping their eyes."

George Mardikian, the immigrant boy, traveled across the continent to the West Coast where his married sister, Baidzar, and Arshag his brother had settled in San Francisco a year earlier. After a few days of sight seeing, he landed a job as dishwasher in a San Francisco cafeteria at a salary of twelve dollars a week. He saved and daydreamed of owning a restaurant of his own some day. Through sheer effort, he advanced rapidly until he became head cook.

In 1928, he received his citizenship papers . . . to him a memorable day. "The big moment of my life," he proudly states, "is when I walked out of the courthouse with my citizenship papers. I wanted to stop everybody on the street and say, 'Excuse me, please, but I am now an American citizen'."

Feeling secure as an American citizen, George Mardikian signed as steward on a round-the-world liner. During his travels, he worked in many countries and in many outstanding restaurants from Alexandria to Hong Kong and from Tokyo to Honolulu. He spent some time in pleasure trips visiting various European ports. He visited the Armenian Monastery at San Lazaro in that little island in Venice, Italy. There he found a large collection of ancient manuscripts from the famous Mekhitarist Vank (Monastery), presenting the fascinating history of Armenian cooking back for thousands of years in the heyday of Armenian kings. He learned a great deal from studying these ancient manuscripts and particularly from the great scholar, the Right Reverend Hatzouni.

On June 1, 1930, George Mardikian was married to Nazenig Ruzvanian.

Two years later, 1932, George Mardikian opened his restaurant in Fresno, naming the new enterprise, Omar Khayyam's, after the famous Persian epicure and poet. Why this name? For a very special reason. He named his restaurant after the Persian poet, despite its Armenian cuisine, because Omar Khayyam was history's number one epicure. Quoting his own words:

"When I thought of a name for a restaurant, I remembered that it was an Armenian merchant who introduced Omar to the delights of wine to help him forget an unhappy love affair, and started him on that immortal dream of a jug of wine, a loaf of bread, and thou . . ."

At first, his venture did not bring any dividends. But after awakening to the value of publicity, he began using the medium of a local radio station fifteen minutes a day to capture the imagination of the town. Soon after that, his business flourished. To accommodate the overflow of customers, he enlarged the restaurant to cover two floors.

"It had become a fixture of Fresno society."

In 1938, he left his brother, Arshag, in charge of this thriving business, and acquired Coffee Dan's in San Francisco. This is the place where he was given his first job in America as a dishwasher. He transformed this favorite Prohibition hot-spot into Omar Khayyam's Restaurant, with dark paneled walls decorated with scenes and verses from the Rubaiyat. In 1946, he had those illustrations replaced with the exquisite oil painting of the famed Persian Armenian artist, Sarkis Khachadoorian. George Mardikian, the art collector, considered this an important event and he designated a day, by invitation only, for the unveiling of these beautiful paintings.

At first, his San Francisco venture was not all smooth sailing, mainly because he followed the advice of a friend who insisted that San Franciscans must have entertainment with their food. This advice nearly bankrupted him. Realizing his great mistake, he eliminated the entertainment and concentrated solely on good food, and in turn, the customers began to concentrate on Omar Khayyam's. Success was immediate. "Well-fed reporters," writes the Saturday Evening Post, "began referring to George in print as 'The unofficial mayor of San Francisco,' and many of them still agree that he could win a real election hands down."

His original recipes and warm personality have gained for Omar Khayyam's an international reputation and it has become the rendezvous for celebrities, gourmets and connoisseurs. He has drawn superlatives from them. Yes, his indestructible faith in his art and faith in people is producing results—friends and millions of dollars a year.

He is president of the United Broadcasting Company, which operates radio station KEEN in San Jose, California, and is National Broadcasting Company's author-

ity on cookery for the West Coast area. His weekly broadcasts, the Romance of Food, over the same station has drawn more mail than any other NBC performance on the Coast.

George Mardikian has been awarded many prizes and medals for his famous dinners served for the International Wine and Food Society, Les Amis d'Escofier and many gourmet society functions. But he considers the assignment—Food Consultant, United States Army—from Secretary of War Patterson, the greatest compliment he has ever received.

George Magar Mardikian attributes much of his success to his employees, "a remarkable group of individualists." Out of an original seven waiters, who were with him when he started Omar Khayyam's in San Francisco, five are still with him. These are his official tasters and critics and they do not hesitate to force him to take a new dish off the menu if it doesn't meet their approval.

During World War II, resourceful George Mardikian introduced some innovations in restaurant operations. Always it has bothered him to see food wasted, because it recalls to his mind the starving peoples of the world. To discourage food waste and help the war effort, he instituted a food-saving program at Omar Khayyam's. To every customer who cleaned his plate, he refunded ten percent of the check in War Savings Stamps. He persuaded other restaurant owners to do the same, and the plan was a huge success.

On Thanksgiving Days in the war years, Omar Khayyam's was reserved for the wounded servicemen as his guests, and he prepared the elaborate Thanksgiving Dinner menu himself. One of his welcoming messages read:

"It is a great honor to welcome you wounded men and your gallant nurses and distinguished officers as our guests for

Thanksgiving dinner. Many of you have given so much that our country might live. I, who was not born an American, can never forget what this means. You who have fought and suffered for our land have the humble gratitude of myself and everyone of my fellow citizens. If I can add to your store of happiness, I feel that I shall have done a little to show our appreciation of what your sacrifices have meant to all of us."

During the war, George Mardikian made it a practice to serve gratis all wounded servicemen and all Armenian American servicemen who happened to drop in. Regarding the Armenian boys, he said:

"They didn't have to prove they were Armenians either, for I could always tell them by their eyes. Armenians have the saddest eyes in the world. But they lighted up when they saw my food."

"Teaching Americans to appreciate lamb," wrote Collier's, "was a pleasant hobby with George Mardikian, whom some folks call Omar and others call Mr. Khayyam . . . With wartime meat shortages, his hobby blossomed into a one-man crusade."

"I owe so much to America, and the only way I can pay it back is in good things to eat," he states enthusiastically.

His one-man crusade even affected the eating habits of the soldiers of the West Coast training camps, who had been grumbling about the unappetizing "goat meat." He learned about this while visiting a large camp.

"That is very strange," he told the Commanding Officer. "Tonight, I will get the dinner. I will cook lamb. I bet you five hundred dollars in War Bonds that the men will eat every bit of 'goat meat' on their plates!"

He won the bet. And as a result of this episode, the Army cooks on the West Coast were introduced to the secrets of

age-old recipes derived from Armenian cookery.

"The restaurant owners in San Francisco were in a dilemma," wrote Time Magazine, "as to how they were going to feed the fifteen hundred delegates of the United Nations Conference." Their spokesman was George Mardikian. In a stately letter to San Francisco's Mayor, he wrote:

"A good dinner will put any man in a conciliatory frame of mind. A bad one will make him quarrelsome and disputative. How men eat definitely influences their judgment as well as their digestion. Empires can be built or destroyed at the dinner table. Peace in our time can well depend upon whether we soothe or insult the gastronomic tastes of our guests . . ." No wonder Life Magazine noted that George Mardikian, to the delegates, was "the most favorably known man in America."

It was with the aid and cooperation of George Mardikian that the Armenian National Committee in an effective and dignified manner presented its program to the United Nations Conference, bringing to its attention the just case of the Armenian question.

There was still no letting up for George Mardikian. He continued "his self-imposed task of spreading the gospel of good eating" as Food Consultant to the United States Army. The Army asked him to find out: "What's wrong with G. I. Food?" This was one call of duty he could not refuse. He was given complete freedom by the Army High Command to go anywhere at any time. He spent nearly five months in American occupied territory with a view to discovering exactly what justification there was for the general griping at Army chow and devising ways and means to correct what was wrong. His thorough investigation took him to Italy, France, Austria, and Germany. He arrived at camps in Army

uniform, unheralded, and ate in Army messes along with other men, receiving exactly the same rations. His detailed report to the Quartermaster General of the United States Army gave enlightened information on the whole food situation in occupied territory. Aside from this thorough report, the new Food Consultant lectured to Army cooks and mess sergeants, urging them to use "eye appeal" in dishes and telling them that they stood in the role of 'mother' to American soldiers. Supplementing informal talks, he gave a weekly radio broadcast over the Allied Forces Network, and wrote for *Stars and Stripes* a weekly column, entitled "George Mardikian Cook's Tours."

As a result of his findings and recommendations, Army food standards have been improved and the culinary units of the Army have been completely reorganized. An Army cook, he believes, should be made to feel that his position is an honor and not a chore. He even suggested that all West Point cadets be given a short course in food. Since he was able to inspire Army personnel from Generals on down with a genuine interest in achieving the kind of food that builds morale, George Mardikian, Food Consultant, feels that his services rendered gratis and the rigors of a severe European Winter were well worthwhile. He has received letters of appreciation from Former Secretary of War Patterson, President Dwight Eisenhower, men in service, and mothers, wives and sisters of men away from home in their country's service.

George Mardikian is the author of a cookbook, *Dinner at Omar Khayyam's* (1944). This cookbook is dedicated to the principles that his "exotic-sounding Armenian dishes can be prepared by the American housewife without recourse to rare ingredients."

It is fitting to quote a few passages from

Mr. William Saroyan's Forward in *Dinner at Omar Khayyam's*. He writes:

"Dinner at Omar Khayyam's is a prize package of a book, but it is more than a cook-book. It is the smiling chef himself—the generous, warm-hearted, enthusiastic, easy-going George Mardikian himself talking to you just as he does in his famous restaurant, Omar Khayyam's; it is the big man with the bright face coming over to your table with a half-dozen out-of-the-world dishes and telling you how they happened to come about in the great fable of man and hunger. It is the historian telling you history mingled skillfully with anecdotes from George's own beautiful fable. It is the comedian laughing with delight at the story of how he outwitted famine by inventing fabulous dishes from such lowly and abundant things as grain, water, salt, imagination and poetry. It is the man himself telling everybody how wonderful it is to be alive, and especially how wonderful it is to be alive in America. . . . George Mardikian is the rarest chef in America—a man of exquisite good health, which spreads itself all around his restaurant like light from a walking human sun; a delightful wit with more and better table delights; a wise companion; and an eloquent speaker of both English and Armenian—my two favorite languages . . . I am fond of George because he is the most civilized human being I have ever encountered . . . He is interested in all good things and has yet to let a writer or a painter or a composer out of his restaurant without stuffing him with every kind of wonderful food in the place. On the other hand, he insists on feeding the lowly—he banquets newsboys as if they were the children of Kings, and he fills his restaurant with homeless men as if they were the greatest men of our time . . ."

George Mardikian is a member of the California Writer's Club, Variety Clubs In-

international, Press Club, World Affairs Council (Honorary), Optimist International (Honorary), Commonwealth Club of California, the San Francisco Opera Association, the Boy Scouts of America, the Save-the-Children Federation, and director of the Golden Gate Restaurant Association. Photography and fishing are his hobbies.

Several years ago, the Executive Committee of the Armenian Youth Federation awarded citations to several deserving individuals for their various worthy achievements. One of the recipients was George Mardikian for his humanitarian endeavors.

His crowning achievement started soon after VE Day. It was he who, while on duty for the War Department in the European Theatre, was first eye witness to the plight of the Armenian displaced persons in Stuttgart, Germany. Their miserable existence touched his heart. He made a solemn pledge to help them. As the organizer and president of the American Committee To Aid Homeless Armenians (ANCHA), with the aid of his assistants, Suren Saroyan (secretary-treasurer) and General Haig Shekerjian (representative of ANCHA in Europe), and the full and unwavering support of the Armenian Relief Society, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation and the Armenian Youth Federation, George Mardikian has been devoting his time and energies to this urgent humanitarian work.

ANCHA has done a superb job in bringing to this country, Canada and South America, nearly 3,600 displaced Armenians from Germany, Austria and Italy.

"Nearly all the displaced persons," comments Harienik Weekly editorially (Nov. 8, 1951), "have found positions and jobs and are on their way to a new, independent and free life which was denied them in the old country. Some of them already are self-sufficient and in a position to extend aid

to their unfortunate kinsmen abroad, who once shared their hapless fate."

Mardikian undertook an extensive trip around the world for the following six objectives:

1—To make a third trip to our occupation zones in Europe, and then a first trip to Japan and to Korea to see about teaching Army Mess Officers how to make G.I. food taste more like what mother used to cook.

2—To try to find homes for 300 destitute displaced Armenians.

3—To dedicate a fountain donated by his wife and himself to the Iranians as a token of friendship in the capital of Iran, honoring that nation's famed poet, Omar Khayyam.

4—To interview students in Lebanon, Syria and Iraq, to whom he is granting a four-year scholarship to American Universities.

5—To spread his personal gospel of the wonders that can be accomplished everywhere by the same ideals as practiced in America, by which the citizens of other nations can achieve their own democracy in their own homeland.

6—To perform a special mission for the Government's relief program abroad.

After completing all of his missions satisfactorily during the six months of extensive travels with his wife, the Mardikians returned to their home in San Francisco. "He brought back," reported the New York Times (July 15, 1951), "several recommendations to lay before General J. Lawton Collins, Chief of Staff, and Major General Herman Feldman, Quartermaster General of the United States Army, to whom he will report in Washington."

On September 12, 1951, at the Presidio, the Headquarters of the United States Sixth Army, General Swing, the Sixth Army's Commanding Officer, presented to Mr. Mardikian the nation's highest civilian

award—the Medal of Freedom. The citation reads:

"The President of the United States of America, authorized by Executive Order July 6, 1945, has awarded the Medal of Freedom to Mr. George Mardikian for meritorious service. Mr. Mardikian, Consultant, Office of the Quartermaster General United States Army, distinguished himself by exceptionally meritorious service in Far East Command from June 5 to July 8, 1951. Motivated solely by an intense interest in the welfare of the American soldier and patriotism for his adopted country, he cheerfully and unselfishly utilized his time and knowledge, without monetary remuneration, in his effort to provide better food service for the combat troops in Korea. Without regard for his personal comfort or safety, he visited food service activities up to and including kitchens and mess lines on the battlefield. With vigorous energy, keen powers of observation and analysis, and a dynamic personality he enlisted the enthusiastic interest of commanders and soldiers alike in the preparation and service of food under the varying conditions prevailing in the combat zone. Drawing on his wealth of experience and

his mastery of food service problems generally, he capably imparted to those responsible for preparing meals, many ingenious, helpful and effective methods of improving food preparations for the American fighting men. Mr. Mardikian's selfless devotion to his mission and his singular accomplishments contributed to the success of the armed forces."

Those who are under the illusion that one cannot be a good American and at the same time be a good Armenian, should take note of George Mardikian.

It is fitting to end this profile with a quotation from the pen of William Chandler, managing editor, The Chronicle of San Francisco:

"Now and then we know a man who reminds us that the great American melting pot produces more pure gold than dross. Such a man is George Mardikian. . . . George Mardikian was an Armenian but I have known no greater American, for greatness is based in the souls of men and his soul is a storage house for genuine love for his fellows—a storage house where, out of his love for mankind, are created deeds and inspiring friendships."



AROUND THE WORLD ON A BICYCLE

HAIK MARCAR

The speaker, Mr. Roy, completed his talk on his recent travels on a motorcycle through India, Burma and Siam to the students of the Armenian School in Calcutta.

As usual, Paul had listened attentively to every word the speaker had uttered. And when Mr. Hughes, the principal, announced that there would be a ten-minute question period, Paul was the first one on his feet: "Is it possible, Sir," he asked, "to make the same trip on a bicycle?" A roar of laughter followed this, and if it hadn't been for Mr. Hughes' silent disapproval, acutely visible on his brow, the boys would have continued laughing for the rest of the period.

"Of course, you can," Mr. Roy replied, "In fact, in most cases, it would be much better to have a bicycle. If I were to make the same trip again, I'd rather use a bicycle. For one thing, you don't have to worry about petrol."

"What about food, sir?" inquired Paul.

"The natives are extremely hospitable. You can always depend on the kindness of the country folks," informed the congenial traveler.

"What did you do when it rained, Sir?" asked Paul. Another roar of laughter ensued. At this point, the Principal rescued Mr. Roy by leading him to the teachers' dining room for tea.

Paul was thirteen then, a year older than I was. He was well liked both by teachers and students, who enjoyed telling funny

stories about Paul, some of which were true. Some, Paul made up about himself to amuse the boys, and some of them were woven by the older boys and attributed to Paul.

His parents were poor, and yet, Paul had everything he wanted. Candy, he got from the boys, and what he couldn't get by asking, he took. Lockers were never safe. It was rumored that if Paul so much as looked at a lock, it would crack open. And indeed, the quantity of soap, towel, hair oil, marbles and other items necessary to the welfare of a thirteen-year-old boy, which regularly disappeared into Paul's impregnable locker, seemed to justify the rumor. Of course, as far as Paul was concerned, he was only borrowing these articles. To all protests, he would reply with all the seriousness of a Mahatma Gandhi: "I don't complain when others use my stuff! Where's my towel, my clean shirt and my tooth-paste? Don't tell me I never had these things!" The fact was he never kept his shirts clean enough as would be desired, and never indulged in the monotonous drudgery of brushing his teeth. He gained the reverence and respect of the critics of his cave-man attitude towards oral hygiene and daily baths through a motto of his that was the last word in sound reasoning and academic logic. It was in the form of questions and answers: "Why does one brush his teeth? Well, because they are dirty. Why does one take a bath? Because he's sweating like a race-horse, or he's a

down right dirty pig. Well, my teeth are clean and I don't sweat and I don't play with pigs."

None of the boys dared to say that Paul had never had any toilet articles, for they themselves frequently found it necessary to borrow from Paul's well stocked supply. And always Paul was more than generous. It could truthfully be said of Paul that he would give you back the shirt off his back.

Paul was tall for his age and somewhat shabby in appearance. To look at him, one would think he was born to become the pastor of a country church, but for those who knew him well, Paul's future seemed to be in the diplomatic field among His Majesty's ministers in the House of Commons.

Most of the boys, like myself, considered Mr. Roy's talk interesting. But its effects on Paul were simply fabulous. As Paul stood in front of Mr. Roy's motorcycle, he went through all the daring adventures of that inspiring speaker. Forging his way through the tropical jungles on a bicycle, fearless and tireless, he overcame all obstacles along the wide path of a boy's imagination. He ripped open the jaws of a fierce tiger; twisted the tail of a wild elephant and befriended the king cobra, a mental journey somewhat different to his last one in which he was a devout missionary, undertaken soon after an inspiring talk about the Christian Missionaries in South India.

"Hush . . . ssh . . . shsh . . . don't make so much noise," Paul whispered, warningly.

"What's all this about?"

"I'll explain it later. Let's go downstairs before you wake up the rest of the boys," suggested Paul.

We went into one of the classrooms downstairs. "I've got the whole route all planned out," said Paul, pointing to the wall map of India and Burma.

"What on earth are you talking about? Where are we going?" I asked, in surprise.

"To Tibet."

"Why?"

"Where's your imagination? We'll be the first people in the world to make this trip on a bicycle. We'll be famous!"

"We haven't got bicycles," I said.

"I've got all that taken care of. I've rented two for a day. Within a day we'll be way out of town," explained Paul.

"When do you plan to return from Tibet?" I asked Paul.

"That's difficult to say. We'll think of that when we get there. The important thing is to get going."

"When do we start?"

"As soon as you're ready. Why don't you go get dressed and bring the bicycles from behind the main building? While I pack some important things for the trip," said Paul.

Paul was dressed in the khaki uniform of the boy scouts.

"What about food?" I asked.

"The Lord will provide food."

Scientific necessities like a piece of white chalk, a log-book, a piece of rope, and the foot of a rabbit for good omen, were all carefully and religiously arranged in Paul's haversack. He was fully aware of the importance of this world-shaking event. He left nothing to chance except food.

It was just before dawn when we sneaked out of school. The streets were empty except for the streetcleaners and out of town buffalo carts bringing in meat and vegetables followed by a train of lean dogs and fat sacred cows. At Paul's suggestion we stopped at the park near the railway station to chart the course of our momentous journey. Paul spread the map on the park bench and said, "We'll take the route by the river going north till it meets the Ganges. And from there we will follow the highway to Darjeeling which is less than fifty miles from the Tibetan border."

"Are you familiar with this route?" I asked.

"Don't worry about that. With a road map, and the natives to guide us, we just can't go wrong," replied Paul.

I was feeling hungry, so I suggested going to the tea-shop at the Railway Station for some breakfast. Upon this, Paul proudly and silently produced two apples, a jar of marmalade, a bar of chocolate, cookies, half a loaf of bread and a bunch of bananas.

"Where did you get all these from?" I asked.

"Seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened," said Paul.

"You didn't steal, did you?"

He picked up an apple, rubbed it on his shirt front, looked at it covetously with a smile and said, "This has some bad spots. It's rotten. Steve the Crook will hear of this."

"So you stole it from Steve?" I surmised.

"Why should I steal when it's much easier to borrow," explained Paul, sinking his teeth half way into the apple.

After breakfast, Paul wrote with his white chalk on the bark of a mango tree: 'We had our first breakfast here on Saturday at sunrise in the year of our Lord Christ 1943 at a time when Great Britain was fighting Japan and Germany. Paul Beglar and his scientist friend.'

"Must you mention the War?"

"You're an amateur in these matters. Historical facts like that add a professional and scientific touch," explained Paul. Having completed this thoughtful act for posterity, we mounted our bicycles and pedalled north with renewed vigor.

"Do you think we'll make it in two weeks?" I asked.

"Sure we will. Maybe, inside of three days," replied Paul.

"I mean both ways," I explained.

"We aren't stopping in Tibet. The world is the goal. Our first major stop will be Lhasa, capital of Tibet, then Ledo, Rangoon, Hong Kong, Shanghai, and from

there to Europe and America," said the inspired Paul.

"How do you figure all these?"

"You'll get the gist of it as we go along," said Paul patronisingly.

All along the gravelled road we talked of the importance of establishing a bond of union between Tibet and the rest of the world. Paul said that he was doing all this especially for the boys and girls of Tibet who had no marbles to play with; no bicycles to ride; and no wrist watches to tell the time. He said his first plan would be to meet the Dalai Lama and get his permission to introduce a half a dozen marble games in the country and later on when they were more familiar with Western Culture he would teach them the art of war from the days of King Arthur to Adolph Hitler.

At noon we stopped at an Indian village to eat. Paul approached the only tea shop in the village and addressed the man in broken but highflown Hindustany, "Wilt thou but serve meat and vegetables to two weary travelers?"

"I'll serve you a live-pig! You devil!" replied the man in colloquial Hindustany.

"You talk to him," Paul said, "you know his dialect better than I do."

"What shall I tell him?" I asked.

"Tell him we are on a great mission," said Paul.

"We are travelers . . ." I began to explain, but the old man cut me short.

"You don't look it. What kind of travelers, anyhow?"

"Tell him we are going around the world," suggested Paul.

"We are going around the world," I said.

"I think you're going the wrong way. Turn back and head south till you come to Calcutta and when you get there stay there. That's the world for you boys," advised the man with a sly smile.

"We are hungry. We need food," I pleaded.

"I need money," snapped the old man.

"How much?" inquired Paul.

"A rupee for the two of you," demanded the man.

"For a rupee we can dine at the Great Eastern Hotel," retorted Paul.

"Then by all means, barha sahib, go there," suggested the man sarcastically.

"I think we ought to give the old miser something," said Paul.

"I don't have a penny with me," I said.

"I have a few odd coins," said Paul.

"You mean genuine ones," I asked in surprise.

Without responding to my question, he pulled out an eight-anna-piece, half a rupee, and placed it gently in the palm of the old man and ordered: "Here, this is all I have. Now, let's have something good to eat, eh . . ."

The old man put the coin in a small tin-can that served as his cash box and served us some native dishes. We had meat and vegetables with rice, cooked in Indian style, some rasagoola (coconut candy) and tea.

"Don't you worry," began Paul, "perhaps this is the first and the last time that we'll ever pay for our meals. The farther we get away from Calcutta the better for us. The natives of the country are extremely generous. They seldom take money for their hospitality. In fact, Mr. Roy said most of them don't even know what money is."

I did not say a word during the meal. I was thinking. I had never seen Paul place a coin so carefully in the palm of a native. I thought it strange. When we were on the road again, I asked him, "Why didn't you toss the coin at the man just like you've always done?"

"And prove that it's fake! The natives can tell a bad coin by the sound it makes just as a musician can identify a musical instrument from its sound," said Paul, with sympathetic consideration for my ignorance of numismatics.

We rode all afternoon, stopping only

twice for drinking water. When the sun went down, and it got too dark for riding we stopped at a village and asked a man if there was any place where we could sleep overnight. The man surveyed us in a hurry and said: "The open fields, boys. Everyone here sleeps in the open. The huts are only to protect the goats and the cattle from tigers."

We put the bicycles beside a tree with fresh grass around it. At Paul's suggestion we built a small fire to keep wild animals away. Paul said that there was nothing in the world that could scare snakes and tigers more than a glowing fire. It was decided that I should go to sleep first while Paul stood watch. Before I fell asleep I saw Paul write on the tree with the white chalk: "Here, I, Paul Beglar, slept overnight on my way to Tibet. Several tigers, snakes and wild insects attacked the camp, but I managed to drive them off the camp without disturbing my friend who sleeps very soundly."

We passed the night with very little sleep. Early in the morning it started to rain and it made things very uncomfortable. We were both drenched to the skin and wished we were back in school sleeping on soft beds instead of going around the world on an empty stomach. Of course, neither of us voiced our real thoughts. All Paul said was, "I wonder if it's raining in Calcutta, now." And I said, "The boys must be getting ready to go to Sunday Mass. They'll have breakfast shortly."

"Do you suppose we could get something to eat in this village?" said Paul.

"I doubt it," I said, "the natives don't seem to recognize the importance of this trip."

We pedalled north till we came to a small town with a lot of dingies on both banks. Paul approached one of the boatmen and asked, "Is there a big town close-by?"

"Gee sahib, just across the river. I'll take

you over for eight-annas," said the man.

"I'll pay you four-annas," bargained Paul.

"Acha sahib," agreed the man, "but pay me in advance."

Paul gave the man a four-anna coin and said to me, "There goes the last of my fake coins."

We crossed the river and headed for the town. On the outskirts of the town, we saw a police sergeant. Paul waylaid him and asked him, "What town is this, sergeant?"

"L'est la village Francaise," replied the police sergeant.

"That's Greek to me," said Paul.

"It's French," I explained.

Just then we noticed a well dressed Indian in European clothes approaching us.

"What town is this?" Paul asked the well dressed man.

"This is Chandernagor, a French town," replied the man.

"How did we get to France so soon?" said Paul.

"You're not in France. Chandernagor is just a French territory in India. Half a mile from here is Chinsura, British India," explained the well dressed Indian.

It had already stopped raining. Paul took out his map, studied it and said, "The man's right. We're practically in Chinsura. I bet we aren't too far off from Pete's place."

"Do you mean Pete, the school monitor?" I asked.

"That's right. His mother lives in Chinsura. Let's go over and say hello to her. Most probably Pete is there for the weekend," suggested Paul.

The vision of a table full of delicious dishes, painted by that unscrupulous artist called the stomach, looked so tempting and so close at hand that the wheels of our bicycles were naturally directed towards the oasis of Pete's home.

Unconscious of any rationalization Paul

said, "This is as good a time as any other to put Pete's mother's cooking to the test."

Pete had often spoken favorably of his mother's cooking.

"Do you think it's safe to go to her place? She'll know we've left school without permission from the Principal," I asked.

"What if she does know? You don't suppose that a woman who can cook so well will squeal on us for trying to bring civilization to Tibet?" said Paul.

I suggested we invite Pete to join us on this trip.

"Nothing doing. This is a two-man job," retorted Paul.

"He's smart, and can be a lot of help to us," I said.

"He's dull and besides too old for our company," said Paul. Pete was sixteen then, and knew his way around the country.

When we reached Pete's house, his mother was standing at the door. She waved to us and smiled. She was glad to see us. "Where are you boys going?" she asked.

asked.

"To Tibet, mam," replied Paul nonchalantly.

"Come in and have something to eat. I'm sure you boys must be hungry," she said. Then she told us that Pete was still asleep and suggested that we take a shower while she got breakfast ready for us.

We had a warm shower and put on some dry clothes which she had laid out for us. While we were dressing, I could hear Pete say to his mother, "Mother, I'll have to go with them just to make sure they get back safely."

We sat down to eat. Everything on the table looked so appetizing that both Paul and I made a hog of ourselves by stuffing ourselves with porridge, eggs, prunes, toast and butter and bananas.

"When do you plan to return from Tibet?" inquired Pete.

"Can't say anything definite just yet," replied Paul.

"What time do you suppose is best to leave Chinsura, Pete?" I asked.

"Mother says that it's best to leave here when it gets dark. You should take the train from here to Jahanam which is a miniature town just like Calcutta, built of plaster by the military to fool the Japanese. There you'll have to have your eyes blindfolded so you won't be able to see any secrets. You'll have to pass through Jahanam to get to Tibet. I wonder if they will allow minors to go through?" explained Pete.

"You can come with us, Pete. They'll let you through." I suggested.

"Say, Mother, are minors permitted to go through Jahanam?" inquired Pete.

"Not unless they're accompanied by someone as old as you," replied Pete's mother.

"Pete, have you seen the Dalai Lama of Tibet?" asked Paul.

"No, but I'd like to," replied Pete.

"If you'd like to see him very much I'll take you to him," suggested Paul.

Pete graciously accepted Paul's offer. Pete's mother packed a lot of canned goods for us to take with us to Tibet. After dinner we said goodbye to Pete's mother and headed for the railway station. We put the bicycles in the luggage compartment and made ourselves comfortable in a first class carriage. When the ticket collector came around, Pete showed him the ticket and whispered something in his ear. The man punched the tickets and said, "I'll have them delivered at that address the first thing in the morning."

After an hour's journey by train we reached Jahanam. Pete blindfolded us and led us from the train to a bus that took one half hour to get through the town. When we came off the bus, Pete made us walk three blocks with our eyes still blindfolded, explaining that we were still in the danger area. Then we heard someone push open a gate. We walked in and entered a building.

"All right now," said Pete, "after we cross this small creek we'll be out of the military zone. Take off your shoes and get ready to cross."

"Are you ready?" asked Pete.

"Yes," we responded simultaneously.

"Walk straight on," commanded Pete, as he gave us both a gentle push in the back. In a second we were in water up to our waists, and we heard a roar of laughter that seemed strangely familiar. The lights were turned on. We removed the kerchieves from our eyes and found ourselves in the school swimming pool with the boys having a good laugh at our expense. Then Steve the Crook called out loud, "Hey, Paul, any apples in the Pacific Ocean?"

This set the boys into another fit of laughter.

We didn't say a word. Silently we dried ourselves, put on our pajamas and went to bed. For a long time after that day, the boys teased Paul about his next trip to the moon. Most of the boys were under the impression that Pete had pulled a fast one on Paul, but Paul said, "There was no other way to get candy and cookies from Pete's Mother. The plan worked just the way I wanted."



THE CHURCH OF ARMENIA

JIRAIR MISSAKIAN

Christianity was introduced into Armenia during the early part of the first century A.D., and the Armenians acknowledge as original founders of their Church the apostles St. Thaddeus and St. Bartholomew who preached the Gospel in Armenia soon after the ascension of Christ. All Christian Churches are unanimous in recognizing the travels and labors in Armenia of St. Bartholomew. There seems to be less certainty, however, concerning St. Thaddeus who some regard as the brother of St. Thomas. The Armenians believe he is none other than St. Judas Thaddeus, one of the Twelve who entered Armenia and preached Christianity.

Some critics contend that the claim of the Armenian Church to Apostolic origin is based on legend. Armenian literature of the period is very fragmentary and consists of legends and epics; but the deficiency of our records is compensated by some actual facts which bear testimony to an origin which is ancient, direct and autocephalic, without the intervening agency of another Church. The Armenian tradition ascribes to the See of Ardaze a line of seven bishops, and a computation of their years in office carries us to the end of the second century. According to another tradition, the See of Sunik had a line of eight bishops who were the successors of the first evangeliser of that province. This was early in the third century. Eusebius mentions a letter of Patriarch Dionysius of

Alexandria addressed in 254 A.D. to Mehroujan, Bishop of Armenia. The Armenian martyrology commemorates a large number of Armenian martyrs of the apostolic period. We find therein the names of St. Sandoukht, of royal blood; of St. Zarmandoukht, a noble lady; of satraps such as St. Samuel and St. Israel; of thousands of Armenians who were martyred at the same time as St. Thaddeus; of St. Ogouhie, a royal princess, and of St. Terentius, a soldier, who were martyred with St. Bartholomew. The Armenian Church calendar contains names of groups of Christians who suffered martyrdom at the hands of Armenian kings. The Latin martyrology also records the name of St. Acacius and his 10,000 soldiers who were executed on Ararat in the reign of Hadrian.

Early Christians

These records indicate the existence in Armenia of a large body of Christians during the three centuries preceding the official conversion of the people to the Christian faith. Indeed, the religious persecutions perpetrated by Kings Artashes about the year 110 A.D., Khosrov about 230, and Tirdat about 287, would certainly not have occurred if there had not been in Armenia a widespread acceptance of the Christian religion. Should, however, the Armenian tradition and ecclesiastical history give occasion for criticism, "these have no greater weight (in the words of Mgr. Ormanian) than the difficulties created with regard to

the origin of other apostolic Churches." It is not disputed that Armenia was the first country in the world to have adopted Christianity as her state religion. The date of the conversion is generally ascribed to the year 287. The central figures in this event were St. Grigor Parthev surnamed The Illuminator, in that he enlightened the people with the light of the Gospel, and King Tirdat who belonged to the Arshakounian Dynasty. They were blood relations. As a result of a political insurrection in Persia an Arshakouni Prince, Anak, had sought to assassinate Khosrov, the King of Armenia, at the instigation of the Sassanian King whose authority he had defiantly ignored. The prince also fell a victim to the Armenian satraps. Anak was Grigor's father, and Khosrov that of Tirdat. And in the year 240, the date of these happenings, these two were still infants.

Tirdat ascended the throne of Armenia in 286 with the support of the Roman Emperor Diocletian whose anti-Christian policy he fully shared. And it was on the occasion of a pagan festival, organized at Eriza, that the Christian faith and connections of Grigor Parthev were first revealed to him. Grigor was imprisoned for having refused to present offerings to the celebrated goddess Anahit.

Subsequently the King embraced Christianity and hastened to proclaim it as the state religion of his kingdom. Following the conversion of the King, the religious life of the country underwent a complete change—heathen gods and their temples disappeared and the profession of Christianity became almost general.

In recognition of the splendid service he had rendered, St. Grigor was chosen to be the head of the Armenian Church, and he was sent to Caesarea to receive episcopal consecration. This event gave rise to a controversy in regard to the relations between the Sees of Armenia and of Cae-

sarea. The contention of the Greeks that the See of Armenia was suffragan to that of Caesarea, or the claim of the Latins that the See of Armenia was instituted as an autocephalic See through the licence of Pope Sylvester¹ are not accepted by the Armenian Church.

St. Grigor, on whom was now bestowed the title of Illuminator, administered the Church of Armenia for about a quarter of a century, and the fundamentals of the internal organization of the Church and the liturgy are ascribed to him or to his time. He was also instrumental in the conversion of neighboring Georgia and Caspian Albania. His death took place in 325, at the time of the Council of Nicaea which was attended by his son—later, his successor—St. Aristakes. Incidentally, for a period of 140 years the office of Catholicos—Supreme Head of the Armenian Church—was the proudest hereditary right of the Illuminator's family, and it was only after the fifth century that celibacy was enjoined on the higher orders of the Armenian hierarchy.

Political and Religious Policy

In the fourth century the Armenian Church was a well-organized institution, but it lacked an element of utmost importance. The Bible, on which the whole edifice of the Christian faith is founded, had not yet been translated into Armenian as there was no Armenian alphabet at that time. The basic principles of the Christian faith were indeed accepted by the majority of the people, but the wider meaning and the theology of the new religion had not yet been defined in the Armenian language. The "Breath of God" (Astvadzas-hoonch) as Armenians call the Bible, and

¹This licence was a spurious document invented by the Armenians themselves in the 12th century, the object being to protect the independence of the See of Armenia without offending the amour-propre of the Papacy, invoking at the same time the aid of the Crusaders in the interests of the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia.

the rituals were read in Greek and Syriac languages. Special translators had to be included in the religious service to interpret orally the sacred book. The absence of an alphabet constituted, therefore, a formidable obstacle to the enlightenment and edification of the masses. Furthermore, severance from ancestral beliefs was not yet complete, at the close of the fourth century, and vestiges of paganism still remained, especially in the Eastern provinces of the country. Added to these were the ineffectual attempts of the Greek Church.

Mesrop Mashtoz, a saintly scholar of eminence, conceived the plan of extirpating every relic of the pagan religion in order to strengthen the authority of the Church of Armenia within and without the country. To achieve this it was necessary that the ordinary people should read the Bible and the teachings of the Fathers of the Church in their own tongue. So the most momentous event in the history of the Armenian people occurred when, in the year 413, St. Mesrop in collaboration with St. Sahak, the Patriarch-Catholicos, after arduous researches, invented an alphabet excellently suited to the Armenian language. It contained 36 letters, (supplemented later by another two letter) which were capable of representing almost every variety of sound both in the native and foreign languages. The next important task to proceed with was the translation of the Bible, and to this purpose were dedicated St. Sahak and St. Mesrop, assisted by a body of scholars selected from among the translators.

The adoption of Christianity as the State religion, the invention of the alphabet and, above all, the translation in 435 of the Bible² were to inaugurate for the Armen-

ian people an era of spiritual and intellectual awakening. The new faith was, by now, rapidly and firmly penetrating into the heart and mind of the masses. Armenia came into closer contact with Western culture. Many important works in Greek or Syriac were translated. It may be interesting to note that the originals of some of these works have been lost, their Armenian versions only are in existence, for example, the Homilies of St. J. Chrysostom, the Providence of Philo, etc. In addition to these translations, the literature of the period was enriched by the original works of a galaxy of Armenian writers. These works, eminently religious in character, were written in excellent classic Armenian. The fifth century is considered the Golden Age of Armenian literature.

Political and Religious Policy

It is important to bear in mind that the conversion of Armenia was a political move designed to counteract all pagan influence in the administration of the country, and to assert the national identity and independence of the people. This courageous action of the Armenians would, inevitably, bring in its wake complications of a political nature, and arouse the mistrust and apprehension of neighboring Persia which made desperate efforts to compel the Armenians to renounce their faith. No amount of persuasion, intrigue or threat could, however, induce Armenia to lapse from Christianity to polytheism.

The first armed conflict of any importance between pagan Persia and Christian Armenia took place in the middle of the fifth century as a result of the final rejection by Armenia of the demand of the Sassanian king. A life and death battle was joined on the 26th day of May, 451 on the Plain of Avarair where 66,000 Armenians led by General Vardan Mamikonian and the heads of the Church, encountered 220,000 Persians, in heroic defence of their

²The first translation was made from the Syriac text. It was found to be unsatisfactory, and a second translation was made from the Greek Septuagint.

Christian religion.³ The Armenians lost the battle, but they were able to hold their own for the ensuing 30 years, against the ceaseless efforts of Persia to impose paganism on the nation. The defeat of Avarair was followed by a long period of complete disorder and disturbances, but Church and people never abandoned faith in final victory. In the year 486 the defenders of the Armenian Church were, once again, compelled to take up arms, under the command of Vahan Mamikonian, who was a nephew of Vardan. The Persians were soon forced to realize the futility of their anti-Christian policy; they abandoned it, and proclaimed religious liberty in Armenia. This great victory opens a glorious page in the history of the Armenian Church. "To the nation," writes an Armenian poet, "Vardan Mamikonian is the symbolic hero who typifies the national spirit; he is to the Armenians what Joan of Arc is to the French."

Church unity was broken in the fourth century when attempts were made to define the true meaning of Christian dogma. No rigid formula had been presented until then on the question of the nature of Christ. Was Christ a creature like us or was He uncreated? Was He God Himself or one of the works of God?

At the Council of Nicaea, in 325, the Bishops decreed that Christ was "Son of God, of one nature with the Father, who came down from Heaven, and took flesh and became man." Subsequent Councils held at Constantinople in 381, and at Ephesus in 431, confirmed this statement, recognizing "One nature united in the incarnate Word."

The Armenian Church accepts as final the pronouncements of these three Councils which she considers as truly oecumenic,

³Scholars have found these figures grossly exaggerated. It is a historic fact, however, that the Armenians were hopelessly outnumbered by the Persians.—Ed.

since they embraced all the Churches of Christendom with the exception of the Nestorian Church. The teaching of Eutyches that "the human nature of Christ became so blended with the divine nature that only the divine remained," or the doctrine of Nestorius who proclaimed "the existence of a purely moral unity between the two natures," are both rejected by the Armenian Church whose formula with regard to Monophysitism is identical with the Ephesian formula of St. Cyril of Alexandria, that is, "one nature united in the incarnate Word."

The Effects of Chalcedon

Up to the year 451, when the Council of Chalcedon took place, the Armenian Church was in communion with the rest of Christendom. Engaged, however, at the time, in a life-and-death struggle against Persia, she was in no condition to indulge in theological disputations, and did not therefore take part in, or accept the decisions of, this fourth Council. The fundamental truths having been formulated during the first three Councils, subsequent Councils are considered by the Armenian Church as superfluous if not dangerous.

According to Armenian theology, there is a distinct difference between a dogma and a doctrine. The dogma is the teaching of the Church, the doctrine is the statement of a school. In other words, dogma is the fundamental truth of a particular Church and should be accepted by its followers, whereas doctrine is the explanation by the theologian of that truth, and its acceptance is not obligatory. The task of explaining a dogma devolves not on universal councils, but on doctors of divinity. In the opinion of a great Armenian ecclesiastical authority, Mgr. Malachia Ormanian, "every dogma with its mysteries constitutes a difficulty for the human under-

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standing . . . It is never wise to increase needlessly the burden of mysteries, nor the number of dogmas, nor that of Councils." This is why the Church of Armenia has refused to associate herself with the labors and decrees of the seventeen Councils which followed that of Ephesus, and has persistently denied them their oecumenic character. Therefore the Armenian Church has followed her own path since the middle of the fifth century, and has maintained her absolute independence, remaining strictly loyal to the creed accepted at Nicaea.

As regards the differences which separate the Armenian Church from the Roman Church, these are dogmatic. The Armenian Church repudiates the spirit of exclusiveness of the Latin Church, and does not believe in her axiom that "whoso is beyond the pale of the Roman Church has no part in eternal salvation." She does not accept the theory of the infallibility of the Pope. She does not accept the Pope as the viceregent of Christ on earth. She does not admit the theory of the particular judgment, the pains of purgatory, the immediate Beatific Vision, Transubstantiation, indulgences, and the Immaculate Conception. The Armenian Church is founded on the spirit of the Gospel, and all other additions are ascribed by her to an improper interpretation of the original creed.

Tolerant, National and Democratic

One of the main characteristic features of the Church of Armenia is her spirit of tolerance. She does not look upon the Catholic, Greek or Anglican Churches as schismatic, and she does not resort to re-baptism or re-ordination when a member of these Churches is admitted to her fold. Every Church which has accepted the dogmas of the Trinity, of the Incarnation, and of the Redemption is a part of the Universal Church. The Armenian Church does not deny the other Churches their right to

differ on matters of secondary importance. On the other hand, she does not admit that any particular Church has the power to arrogate to herself the character of universality; hence her dislike for the exalted appellations of "Catholic" and "Oecumenic" adopted by the Latin and Greek Churches respectively.

The Armenian Church is extremely liberal in matters theological and ecclesiastical. It is impossible to find in her annals religious persecutions, inquisitions or attempts at enslavement of the minds of her adherents.⁴ Undoubtedly it is due to this liberalism that foreign proselytism has been made possible among the Armenian people.⁵

The Armenian Church is eminently national in character. Church and people form an indivisible whole, and it is impossible to conceive one without the other. We might call her an "established" Church in a wider sense. The Church has no adherents outside the limits of the nation.

Another salient feature of the Armenian Church is that she belongs as much to the laity as to the ministers of worship. The clergy are not the absolute masters and owners of the Church, and, apart from sacramental acts for the performance of which ordination is indispensable, the faithful take an important share in the ecclesiastical administration, within the framework of the National Constitution of 1861. Each Church is managed by an ephorate composed entirely of laymen, who are elected by the parish. Not only the village priest, but even the Catholicos, the Supreme Head

⁴Comparatively speaking, this statement is true. But there have been periods when the Armenian Church opposed the encroachments of the Paulicians, Catholics, and Protestants, driven no doubt by the instinct of self-preservation. No such intolerance exists today.—Ed.

⁵The total number of Armenians in the world is about three and one-half million (two and one-half million within the Soviet Union, and one million scattered throughout the world). Of this total only five to seven per cent belong to the Latin or Protestant Churches.

of the Church, is elected by the people. In matters of doctrine the laity has also a dominant voice. Therefore, the Church is founded on and governed by democratic principles, and the clergy, as an independent caste or class, is unknown to the Armenian Church.

The Church of Armenia is autocephalic in that she owes allegiance only to the Catholicos of Echmiadzin whose full title is "The Servant of Jesus Christ and by the Inscrutable Will of God Chief Bishop and Catholicos of all Armenians, Supreme Patriarch of the Most Eminent See of the Apostolic Mother Church of Ararat at the Holy Cathedral of Echmiadzin."

The Seven Sacraments

The Armenian Church administers the Seven Sacraments with this exception, that Extreme Unction is given to the clergy only. Infants receive baptism by complete and horizontal immersion. Confirmation, or holy anointing, is administered immediately after Baptism. Nine different parts of the body are anointed with the Holy Chrism—the forehead, the eyes, the ears, the nostrils, the mouth, the palms, the heart, the back and the feet. Then the infant is admitted to labial communion. The sacrament of penitence or confession takes place according to a general formula wherein all imaginable sins are enumerated. Following the auricular confession the penitent, who has fasted, receives Holy Communion. The sacrament of marriage is known under the name of the sacrament of the Crown, and is solemnised by the

priest. Divorce is canonically permitted by the authority of the Catholicos. The bans of consanguinity reach to the fifth degree, and those of affinity to the fourth degree.

The Armenian Church uses unleavened bread and unmixed chalice.

To the Armenians their Church is known under the appellation of "The Armenian Church" or "The Church of Armenia, or Armenians." Any other designation, such as Gregorian or Illuminator (from the name of St. Gregory, the Illuminator,) or Echmiadznakan (from the name of the Holy See,) are incorrect and misleading.⁶

The ancient Church of Armenia has, for many centuries, been through fire and sword, with the nation and by the side of the nation. She has retained her existence unimpaired, sustained by the faith alive among her flock. She has contributed, in no small way, to the development of Armenian culture. She has been, and still is, a powerful link between all Armenians throughout the world. She has, naturally, yielded some ground in the political life of the people, but her authority in its social and spiritual life is as strong as ever. The Church is jealous of her independence, without, however, being averse to the idea of a union of all Christian Churches. On the other hand she hopes that the proposed union will take neither the form of domination nor absorption. She firmly believes that a rapprochement of true Christians is for the good of all peoples.

⁶To call her Illuminatorian is to post-date the foundation of the Church by 300 years.



A LOOK INSIDE A SOVIET PRISON

ARMEN SANINIAN

Sleep in the wagon was a veritable nightmare to me that night. In my dream I was reconstructing the gruesome happenings of the preceding day, the unleashing of the dogs, the beatings of the prisoners by the guards. It was all so vivid to me as if it was being enacted in real life. Having pointed his pistol at my temple, the captain of the guards was shouting at me, "Sit down, I tell you!" while Chumakov laughed, "He must not sit down. Fire! I tell you fire."

The guard fired but there was no explosion. He again fired and again there was no explosion. The terrified prisoners were staring at us. Chumakov stopped laughing. He grimaced. "Now, now," he said as he drew from his holster a scintillating blue lovely revolver. He took careful aim then fired. I heard the click and woke up terrified.

The train was moving right under my ear. I could hear someone tampering with the wagon wheels with a hammer, as if making a recheck. By the thin light dust which suffused the darkness inside I could tell that it was daylight. By now all the prisoners were awake and were talking to each other in fearful low tones. The youth beside me was staring at me. "You had a bad sleep," he said to me, "you were talking in your sleep all the time."

"What was I saying?" I asked.

"I could not understand. It was not Russian."

"Why has the train stopped?"

"How should I know? It may always stand still without our being aware of it."

"That's right. I sometimes forget that I am a mere object now."

He peered more closely at me. "I recognize you," he said.

"Where have you seen me?" I was alarmed. In Soviet prisons no one must recognize you.

"Yesterday when the guard wanted to shoot you. You were lucky to escape that time. They get a great kick out of killing people."

He stopped, then again asked, "Why did you refuse to sit down?"

"I don't know. It happens to me like that sometimes. What I saw on the way must have affected me."

"It was awful," he drew a deep sigh.

It seemed my neighbor was not a spy. "You were crying last night, maybe you have some loved ones?" I asked.

"Yes, my wife, my mother and two children."

"Did they come to the station?"

"Yes."

"Why did they arrest you?"

"For an ill-fated arithmetic problem."

"Just what?"

"I am a teacher."

"And?"

"One day in the classroom instead of saying 'the kolkhoznik took to the market'

I happened to say the villager took two cows to the market to sell them, etc. One of my pupils objected saying, 'Comrade teacher, that is not correct. How can the peasants have two cows? The kolkhoznik can have only one cow'. He was right, and I, trying to correct my error, sank even deeper. I said, 'I am not speaking of present day kolkhozniks, I am speaking about the former villagers'. You can understand the rest," he sighed.

"How did the Cheka come to know of this?"

"The schoolmaster made a full report, obviously for his own safety. He is a Communist."

"What will happen to you now?"

"Reeducation through hard labor."

After a long pause I asked, "Did they torture you?"

"Yes, only once when they urged me to sign a confession that my arithmetic was deliberate."

"Did you sign it?"

"Yes. I am terribly afraid of torture, especially when they threatened to kill me."

"I would never have signed it."

"Yes you would. It seems you have never seen a rubber whip."

"I have seen it," I said — and a shiver went through my body as I remembered the beating I had received.

The train was still standing when suddenly the door of our wagon was opened.

"Out, out with you, quick," the guard shouted in Russian.

The prisoners herded out of the wagon. I was blinded by the daylight as I stepped out. They herded us in a big truck, facing the opposite direction.

"Forty is enough. Guards take your positions," someone ordered. The guards took their positions around the motor.

The truck raced toward the city. We were going through streets utterly unknown to me. It being daylight the people

were hurrying to their work. They watched us for a moment with sad frightened looks then hung their heads and proceeded on their way. I took in the sight voraciously knowing well that in a short while I would be confined in a dark cell.

"Cover your faces," suddenly a guard ordered. At first I could not understand the strange command, but when the full meaning dawned on me I blushed with humiliation and shame. "I will not cover my face," I resolved as I saw all the others obey the command. "I will sooner die rather than to submit to such a shameful command."

The command was issued so that the citizens should not see our faces, nor we theirs. At first all went well and the guards did not spy me. But finally the guard near me noticed it. I shall never forget him. Even now I see him before me, a short thin man with sharp rat eyes. For a second our looks met. In mine there was beseeching, begging him not to do this shameful thing to me, mingled, it seemed, with a twinkle of human dignity. I had to have his pardon, especially because I was no longer looking out.

He smiled at me at first, the smile of a hyena. Then he became furious and shouted, "Cover your face."

"No, I won't," I replied firmly.

"What?" he roared, and seizing the barrel of his rifle, he brought the butt down heavily at me over the heads of the intervening prisoners. The blow would have shattered my head were it not for the intervening heads and the shaking of the vehicle. It struck me on my right temple. Instinctively I took my hand to the wounded spot. There was an instantaneous swelling, covering my eye. The guard was pleased that I had obeyed his command. "That's it," he smiled. Seeing him smile, I instantly removed my hand and looked straight in his eyes, as if wanting to say, "No, it's not what you think." He again

raised his rifle when the guard behind him warned him, "Leave him alone, the crowd is looking."

"But he did not obey the command."

"There is no need any more. We have already reached our destination."

Presently we found ourselves in the courtyard of a prison. The prisoners uncovered their faces and filed out of the truck. It was a spacious and amazingly clean yard. In the center was a good-sized flower bed surrounded by a low fence, suffused by the gray of the approaching winter. The courtyard was surrounded by gay three story buildings with quite wide windows. The glass of the windows was clean. They were well curtained. Many of the windows were decorated with lovely flower pots. But besides the Chekists there was no sign of man.

It did not look like a prison to me. Later we learned that we had entered the Cheka's outer court. The real headquarters was behind one of those buildings, or in the basements of all the buildings, no one knew where, because no one could see it either from the street or the inside.

After the guards turned us over, the Chekists took us in through a narrow door, through dark and winding corridors, until we reached an iron fence which stood like an abrupt wall, from ceiling to floor. They led us in through a small door in the fence into what looked like a big hall without windows. The hall was bare, cold and dismal, although lighted with electricity. Sitting at his desk in the center, a Chekist was holding a conversation with his fellow Chekists while smoking lazily. They paid no heed to us until they finished their conversation.

"Is this the last shipment?" the Chekist asked one of our escorts.

"No, Comrade Paret, there is one more shipment."

The Paret made a sour face and looked

at his watch. Apparently he was cursing us for being so many.

"All right, let's start," and he began to check our names on his list. When the fortieth name was checked, one of the Chekists turned to us and ordered us to undress. We began to undress. Presently all forty of us stood there naked, our teeth chattering from the cold. Then the Chekists began to search our clothes and even our naked bodies. By the time it was my turn I was watching all thirty-nine as they submitted to the sordid ordeal. They were not the bodies of living men but ghosts. They were emaciated bodies with the sallow skin clinging to the bone, marked with black blotches, the result of old and new wounds. I watched the body of the teacher who had been brutally beaten because of an arithmetical error. As I saw it I shrank back with horror. One could not watch that skinned skeleton of sticking bones without a shudder. Once again I asked myself if he should have signed the confession and I could find no answer. The teacher had told me that he was afraid of a beating, but I could see that he had stubbornly refused to sign. He had endured long. He had signed it only when they threatened to kill him.

Of a truth, dying under the rubber whip means a thousand deaths, to die in body but not in soul, to die with the pangs of hell.

When the searching was over they consigned us to our cells, in singles or two's I wanted badly that the teacher would be my cellmate. I had much to talk with him, besides, I had almost become intimate with him. And lastly, he was the only man I knew. But the Paret sent me to my cell alone.

My escort took me out of the hall. We descended a stairway until we reached a new iron fence which likewise made an

abrupt wall in the space. On the other side of the fence was a long narrow lane, illuminated by low electricity, reeking with the pungent odor which is characteristic of jails. The aisle was so silent that you could have heard the flight of a cricket. The superintendent of the prison, a giant man with woolen slippers, tiptoed like a cat and opened the door. "Number 176," my escort reported and withdrew.

At first I thought I was the 176th prisoner. Later I learned that 176 was the number of my cell where I lived for six months, what seemed like six hundred years, the most terrible days of my life.

The superintendent closed the door and nodded to me to advance. Together we walked a long way beside doors which opened on right and left, behind which languished thousands of living buried citizens, "the most free citizens in the world." We stopped in front of my cell, the black number 176. As the superintendent opened the door, I wondered what all I was to see inside that black cell.

"Get inside," he pushed me in. For a long time I stood there, in front of the door. It was not a big cell, the size of an ordinary room. On either side of the narrow door was an elevated wooden flooring which extended to the opposite wall, leaving a narrow aisle in the middle. At the extreme end of the aisle, under the low ceiling, could be seen an iron latticed dark window, so cleverly constructed that it completely prevented the outside light from coming in although it allowed a small amount of ventilation. No one knew in which direction the window faced. The dusty electric bulb lit the upper part of the room with a dim light. The lower part was half dark.

The air in the cell was heavy and fetid, thick like water, saturated with the odor of human bodies which had gone unwashed for months and the stench of their exhalations. The cell was crowded with

men, flabby, lifeless and sickly, suffering for months from sickness, packed there like sardines on the bare planks. Their faces were pale and hairy. Their eyes, in deep sockets, were bloodshot and red from the electric light. They were nauseatingly filthy at the same time pitiful enough to provoke the tears of a grown man. Pitiful beyond comprehension.

As the door closed upon me all eyes turned on me, as if to say, "Behold, another unfortunate soul."

"Sit down, Comrade," said the prisoner who was lying on the edge of the flooring directly under the wall, making room for me.

I sat down and held my head in my hands.

"Not that way," the man sat up and pulled my arm.

As I was about to thank him when I felt a hot unpleasant breath on my face. As I raised my head I saw before me a human wreck, who leaning against me was examining me with the earnestness of a madman, so close that he nearly pressed his slimy nose against mine. He was a bundle of rags and filth. His head, set upon a neck which was black from dirt, bobbed to and fro, as if trying to scrutinize me more closely. His luxuriant beard was disheveled with the hair of his head. As to those twin eyes which twinkled under his bushy eyebrows, they clearly indicated that the man was a lunatic.

I instinctively recoiled, at the same time trying to disentangle my feet. I wanted to jump and run away. Seeing it, the madman let out a blood curdling cry, leaving open his toothless mouth.

"I found him, at last I found him," he clapped his hands with ecstatic joy. He was dancing on one foot. "There were so many who would not do it. You did it. Let's go." And he tried to seize my hand.

I drew back in horror, trampling on

the others. But the latter smiled charitably, showing their wisdom.

"Feodor, go sit in your place otherwise I will call the guard to take you away for a new questioning." The speaker was the man who had made room for me. The minute he heard the word questioning, Feodor drew back and like the mouse running away from the cat he crawled under the opposite platform.

"He is a bit out of his mind, pay no attention to him," said the man who had quieted Feodor.

"Feodor, stop it, there are no guards here," another prisoner admonished Feodor irritably.

Feodor stopped scratching the earth.

"Why is he scratching the cement?" I asked.

The prisoner smiled. "He thinks he can get under the ground so they will not find him for a questioning."

"Has he always been mad?"

"No, he lost his mind right here, right before our eyes."

"What was the cause?"

The prisoner said nothing, he merely smiled.

Later I learned that Feodor, until his arrest, had been an accountant in a government institution. This year the devil had tempted him to take a Summer vacation in a distant village together with his family. Upon his return to the city he had been arrested. At first they had forced him to confess that he had taken his vacation abroad where he had sold important Soviet secrets pertaining to trade to some foreign government. Poor Feodor at first had been stunned and tried to prove that he had spent his vacation at a certain village, at the home of a certain relative. But the Chekists had not believed him. Like all prisoners who are stubborn, he had been subjected to the Soviet third degree.

At first they had used fists and kicks,

knocking out his teeth, but Feodor had refused to yield. Then they had resorted to the rubber whip which can easily kill a man. Unable to endure longer, Feodor had signed his confession, admitting all the charges. After the signature Feodor had thought that they would shoot him, and thus end the matter. But this hope, too, proved illusory. The next day they called him back and asked him to give the names of his accomplices. This time Feodor cried, and tried to make his tormentors believe that he had no accomplices, that he alone was responsible. The Chekists had laughed at his simple-mindedness and had told him to go tell his grandmother similar fables. He could not have traveled abroad all by himself, without confederates, they had argued. "What? Do you think our guards at the border were asleep so you could sneak out. Tell us, who helped you?"

But although he had accused himself to escape further tortures, Feodor could not accuse innocent men. So they had resumed the third degree during which time he had lost his mind, but even after this they did not stop the interrogation and the flogging until he revealed the names of his accomplices.

This accounted why Feodor, every time a new prisoner joined the company, accused him jokingly that he was one of his accomplices. But because he dreaded the questioning, the prisoners sent him under the platform plank to hide himself. Here he scratched the cement thinking he could hide himself.

At first I thought only Feodor lived under the platform, but when meal time arrived I saw that our cell was divided into two worlds, those who lived on the platform, and those who lived under it.

Usually the prisoners do not lie down. They sit down or remain standing. And this, not only for one day, but for weeks and months. Under the circumstances

these platforms are very convenient. Where there are platforms, the cell is divided into two worlds, inasmuch as half of the prisoners prefer to live under the platforms, although the cement is cold. These are obliged to lie down. There is a Soviet novel, in which when the prisoner was asked how many years he sat down, he replied that he did not sit down one day. He lay down for five years. Half of the prisoners of our cell laid down under the platform. I was one of them. There were more than forty of us.

The first day they gave me nothing to eat, although I had not eaten for two days. When I told the superintendent about this he merely growled "tomorrow." "Why do they do this?" I asked one of the prisoners. He looked at me conscience-stricken, then he looked at his soup. "That is the rule for the newcomers," he explained. "But never mind, I will share my soup with you." Saying it, he crawled under the platform. A moment later he stuck out his head and handed me a spare tin utensil. "Take it," he said. "No, keep it," I said. "how can I rob you of your share?" But when I watched his eyes I took it.

At the bottom of the tin cup was a muddy liquid reeking with a stench. Our whole cell was filled with this stench. Having no spoon, I began to sip the liquid. It was hot water, spiced with the nauseating odor of stinking fish. I looked around me. They all were licking their tin cups.

After drinking my soup I wanted to return the cup to the owner. "There is no water," I apologized, "so I could not wash the cup."

"Come in, come in," he intoned in a voice as if he was inviting me into a swanky private chamber. He was lying on his back, relaxing as if it were after his royal dinner. I crawled my way to his

side and lay there on my belly. it was impossible to sit up.

I could not see his face in the dark, so I said, "Why don't you lie down the other way around so your head would be to the light?"

"No," he objected. "This way is more practical. First when you enter in (he always spoke about entering in). You enter head first and crawl until you hit the wall. It is hard to enter in feet first. Your feet inside, your head exposed, it makes a man look silly. Furthermore, it is easier to come out. First, you lie on your back, then pressing your hands against the floor, you crawl out link by link. There is another important consideration. When your head is exposed, those who lie on the platform pour all kinds of dirt in your mouth and eyes as they ascend and descend, something which is not pleasant."

"Oh," I said, "how well you have studied all the details. You must have been sitting here for a long time."

"No, not so long. But one must invent the minimum of convenience under the circumstances."

"How right you are. Here is your cup and thanks a million."

He seized my hand. "Take it," he said, "I make a gift of it to you. You shall need it."

"And you?" I asked, unable to conceal my happiness at such a precious gift.

"I have another, son." I noticed that his voice trembled as he said it.

"But you are laughing. You haven't got another."

"I have," he replied. "You mistook my agitation for laughter. These two tin cups have a long story."

"Very interesting."

"When did they arrest you?" he asked suddenly.

"It was past midnight."

"They arrested me at the same time.

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We all were asleep, my wife, I and my daughter. I never dreamed that they would arrest me. After all I was a scientist. I knew nothing outside of my science. Can you believe me when I say that until my arrest I did not know what a prison was? I thought they all had been demolished because the leaders of the revolution had promised it."

"Yes, they promised it, but the story of the tin cup is more interesting. So you were asleep."

"Right you are. I digressed from my subject. So we were asleep. Then I heard the door bell ring. I opened my eyes. It was still dark outside. My wife too woke up. I asked her if Valia was at home. Valia is my daughter. She got nervous. Valia never is outside at nights, she said. My wife kept a strict eye on her daughter. I lit the light and went to the door.

"Who is it? I asked."

"Oh, Professor, you will pardon me for disturbing you at this hour but a very important matter compels me to talk to you for a few moments," a polite voice spoke from the outside.

"What? In the middle of the night?"

"Yes Professor, this matter has to do with the government."

"So that's it. Who are you?"

"The man chuckled. Professor, don't you recognize the voice of your assistant Yacoubov?"

"Akh, Mischa, is it you? Wait a minute till I turn the light on."

"I turned on the light and opened the door. I faced three Chekists but there was no Mischa.

"Where is Comrade Yacoubov?" I asked bewildered. One of the Chekists seized me by the arm while the other shut the door. Don't worry, Misha will soon be here. Let's go to your private room," he said. Pale with fright, my wife was standing at the door of the bedroom. What hap-

pened? she asked. But the Chekist anticipated me. Nothing, madam, nothing. It's a small matter which concerns the government."

"We entered my private study. They made me sit on a chair. Don't move. Let's have your firearms. Where have you hidden your foreign literature?"

"I thought they were joking with me, so I burst into a chuckle. I must say that was my last chuckle.

"This is not a laughing matter, citizen Berkowski. Remember you are talking to the representative of the Cheka."

"The representative of the Cheka?" I exclaimed choking on the words. A shudder went through my body. What business have you got with me?" I stammered.

"You are under arrest," he replied coldly.

"At this my tongue was loosened. I protest, I will appeal to the government. Do you know who I am? I am Professor Berkowski. I am a member of the faculty of USSR sciences. I have medals." I would have said many more things had I not heard their murderous guffaw. That guffaw completely changed me. From that moment I became an entirely different man. Something snapped inside me. I felt that intellect, science, name and fame were nothing in a land where the guffaw of a Chekist reduces them to absurdity."

"But I would not let him continue. I leaned toward him and whispered in his ear.

"Be careful, Professor, there might be spies in the cell," I warned him.

"What did you say?"

"Very simple. On the train I heard that the Cheka keeps its agents in all the cells who report everything they hear exaggerating it tenfold."

The Professor shut up like a clam. There was a deep silence in the cell. The prisoners apparently were deep in thought.

Thus the story of the Professor's arrest was half finished and I never learned how he got hold of his two tin cups. All the same I was very happy over my tin cup, my only property in jail which proved very useful to me until it wore out and I had to discard it.

I thanked the Professor for his gift and was about to leave him when he seized my hand. "Where are you going?" he asked. "This spot is unclaimed, you can keep it."

"How come?" I asked thrilled. I had supposed that I would stand on foot for several days until they made room for me.

"The man who occupied this place was taken away last night. Should he return you can look for some other place. Meanwhile the place is yours."

Just then the prisoner to the Professor's right interrupted. "You can keep it. Its occupant will never return. He got twenty years and I think he is already on his way to exile."

"Twenty years?" I exclaimed in horror. "You know I am a bit superstitious. If I sleep here I too might get twenty years."

"I know something else," the man laughed.

"You know what?"

"What you say has actually happened oft and on."

"You mean?"

"Your predecessor who got twenty years was an engineer and his predecessor who was an agricultural expert got ten years. You too will get ten years."

"Regardless of the similarity of crimes?"

"Regardless."

We were joking of course but the Professor took it seriously. "And how many years did my former occupant get, neighbor?" he asked.

"Very little, Professor."

"And his predecessor?"

"Quite a little, Professor."

The Professor was scared. He tried to sit up but hit his head against the plank and fell on his back.

"Hey, take it easy, you are ruining state property," someone wisecracked, provoking a suppressed laughter in the cell.

My new quarters proved to be a regal one. The Professor let me share his blanket which covered the cement. I used my shoes for a pillow and my coat for a blanket. Thus I lay squeezed between the Professor and the occupant on my right who had just returned from questioning. The latter had hardly entered the cell when all the inmates turned on him. "Did they flog you?"

"Where is my ration? Did you save a ration for me?" the newcomer asked without paying attention to their question. I could not see him but I felt that the man was too exhausted from hunger to be able to speak. Apparently they had saved something for him because we could plainly hear how voraciously he was devouring his meal.

When he was through they again asked him, "Did they flog you?"

"No," he said, "they did not flog me today."

The cell was in a bedlam.

"You say they did not flog you?"

"There was nothing to flog me for. I signed the confession," he sighed deeply.

There was a hush in the cell. Only the Professor's neighbor softly remarked - "You fool!"

"Yes, yes, I am a fool," he raised his voice, "yes, yes, I am a fool, a real fool. Why should I be blamed? You all know what I suffered. For months they have been questioning me, they ruined my body, destroyed my soul, my soul, do you hear?"

"You talk as if we did not know, as if

the same thing has not happened to us all," someone remarked.

"I didn't say they did not torture you, but nothing like mine. No, nothing like mine. Mine was different." He stopped a moment, then began to cry piteously, "My God, my God!"

I could stand it no longer and I whispered in the Professor's ear, "What was he accused of?"

"He is an officer of the army, accused of military conspiracy."

"Is he innocent?"

"I think he is. He is a Communist."

"What?"

"I said he is a Communist. Why are you surprised?"

"To this day I did not know Communists too could be arrested."

"There are many of them."

The officer was pacing the aisle, wailing piteously, "My God, my God, what have I done? My God."

"It is too late to be sorry now," someone remarked indifferently. "Judging from the charges, they will shoot you."

"Let them. That's just what I want."

"I think he will get twenty years," another ventured.

At first I thought these men really wanted to torment the poor man but later I learned that this was the accepted rule in the cell, to speak out what they thought.

The officer crawled under the plank and eased his way to my side. "My God, my God," he kept sobbing. I wanted to see his face badly but it was too dark.

Someone from under the planks interrupted the silence, as if talking to himself, "I wonder who of us will be asked for questioning tonight." No one answered, no one seemed to want to answer. The Professor made a nervous gesture, as if he was trying to hide himself. Noticing his fear I whispered in his ear, "Are you afraid of questioning?"

"Yes," he whispered.

"Have you ever been questioned?"

"No."

"Why are you afraid?"

"I am afraid of the torture."

"I don't think they will torture you," I said with conviction.

He was glad to hear this. "Why won't they torture me?" he asked.

"Your age and your scientific rank."

He pressed me to himself as if I was his son. "Ah son, that's what you think," he said. "It is the human in you which speaks, but they . . ."

Just then we heard the door of the cell open. A hush fell upon the inmates. All were awestruck, wondering who would be called next.

"Vasiliev, come out," rang the voice of the Chekist.

Someone from under our plank crawled out. I could not see him.

"Leave your coat here, it is warm in the examiner's office."

A moment later the door was closed. All the inmates sighed with relief.

"Good thing they didn't call you," I said to the Professor.

"There is plenty of time until daylight. Did you hear that monster's command?"

"Who?"

"The Chekist."

"The man who took Vasiliev away?"

"No. The man who ordered the poor man to take off his coat."

"I did not understand why he did that."

"You are new and do not know. Prisoners generally dress heavy when they go to questioning in order to soften the effect of the whip. But the Chekists want the exact opposite to intensify the pain."

My body trembled like a leaf from indignation. Feeling it, the Professor asked, "Are you cold?"

"No, Professor."

"Have they ever tortured you?"

"Yes, Professor. Three times. But I received only one blow each time."

"How did you feel when you were being flogged?"

"Physical pain. But to a greater degree the insult to my human dignity, spiritual degradation, how shall I say it?"

"I understand," he sighed.

One again the door of the cell opened. "Prokofev, come out."

When they took Prokofiev away the officer to my side suddenly came out from his lair and standing in the middle of the aisle challenged the prisoners.

"One of you called me a fool when he learned that I had signed a confession. Who was that man? Let him come out. I want to see the color of his hair."

No one moved.

"Hey you scientists, I am talking to you, you cowards"—he continued—"you who are afraid to tell me why I shouldn't have signed my confession, how do you propose to behave when they shatter your bones, when they put your hands in a vice and pull off your nails?"

"As if he is telling us something new," one of the inmates remarked sarcastically.

"Who was that man?" the officer roared.

We of course understood him. He was itching for a fight. A free man, and perhaps innocent, having been arrested, incarcerated, tortured and humiliated, he wanted to get the accumulated bitterness of his heart out of his system or else he would go mad. He wanted to talk, to hit somebody or get hit.

"Akh, don't you want to talk to me, don't you want to fight me? Hah. You all are cowards, cowards, you hear?"

Suddenly he started to cry, a cry which gives one a gooseflesh, a cry which comes from the depths of a soul which has been wronged, has suffered, a cry which is full of protests, resentment and boundless longing for freedom.

There was a muffled stir in the cell. The Professor whispered in my ear. "This cry has saved him. It is better this way."

I crawled out of my lair. A few of the inmates had gathered around the officer and were watching him silently as he, covering his face in his hands, sobbed loudly. A kindly old man put his hand on the officer's shoulder and said consolingly: "Take it easy son. You are a grown man. Bear your suffering like a man. We too, like you, and like millions of others are the victims of the same tyranny. But truth always has come out victorious. Have faith in truth. And if just now it is too weak to save you physically, at least it can comfort you spiritually. Feel sorry for your comrades, for the millions like you, and you will see that your suffering will lighten."

The officer stopped crying, uncovered his face, and turning to the old man murmured almost inaudibly, "Thank you, father." The old man smiled tenderly, gently tapped on his shoulder and returned to his lair.

The officer was a handsome youth. He turned his blue tear-dimmed eyes on me and asked, "Are you new here?"

"Yes," I said, "we are neighbors. Let's get back to our places."

He rose slowly and the two of us crawled back to our places under the plank. When we were settled, he asked, "What is going on outside?"

"Nothing new. It is exactly the same as when you were arrested."

"Is there any sun outside?"

"There is."

"Are there freely walking men, girls, laughter, music, movies?"

"Why not?"

"Really, why not? Do you love life?" he suddenly asked.

"Very much."

"But not as much as I do," he sighed.

It was midnight. There was complete silence in the cell. Suddenly someone cried out in his sleep.

"Ah, ah, please do not torture me, do not torture me, I am innocent, innocent."
Then he burst into a paroxysm of tears.

THESE, MY PEOPLE

*Ancient race memory comes to me
And tears fall
Why do I feel no happiness was there?
The sea was blue and green and
beyond all things
In its middle was fire . . . and nothing
was above
Fire and sea . . . only fire and sea
Ritual chants were from the depths
And the God was below the depths
unseen and sung
All . . . powerful
No color but blue and green . . . and
red fire . . .*

*Suddenly
An immense surge
From the depths a silence so vast
and powerful rose . . .
A silence of beautiful face and form.
Up through the sea it rose.
And through the fire
I called
Words shaped and yet no speech . . .
I touched the silent surge
and my hands became
blood . . .*

CHARLOTTE MARKARIAN

HAFIZ AND HIS ROSE GARDEN

EDWARD TAROIAN

Hafiz the great poet, after enjoying the splendour of the most sumptuous courts of the East for more than forty years, retired to his private estate in the environs of Shiraz to spend his old age in the solace of his rose garden.

One lovely evening in May, while strolling through his garden, he noticed that one of his rose bushes had been completely stripped of its reddest roses. Being without a family, and having resigned all the glories of the world to dedicate himself to the culture of his beloved roses, the old poet was deeply depressed at sight of his deflowered rose bush and gave his keeper strict orders to intensify his vigilance. But the very next evening he saw that another of his rose bushes had been stripped.

"Who is this vandal who takes such delight in invading my garden," he sighed deeply, and decided to keep personal watch until he caught the thief.

He kept watch until morning, and night flowed on like a gentle river, peaceful and tranquil. But, at dawn, the poet heard a rustle in the bushes, and watching more closely, he noticed a little girl who might have been eleven or twelve, flying from bush to bush with the agility of a bird, until she reaped a gorgeous bouquet, then briskly climbing over the wall, headed straight to the city.

"Ah, little thief you!" Hafiz exclaimed and tried to follow her on the main road. It was an arduous chase but the old poet was determined to catch the thief.

After she reached the market place the girl started to scrutinize the shoppers with

the intention of finding the most generous customer among them, of course. And without paying any heed to several old cronies who, under the pretext of learning the price, approached her to take a whiff of the roses, she ran toward a handsomely dressed young woman and offering her the bouquet, said to her:

"Madame, you are such a beautiful and lucky woman. Wouldn't you like to accept these lovely roses from the hand of a poor girl? See, they are as fresh and fragrant as your lips. I got up at dawn to reap these choice and throbbing jewels. Believe me, my hands are still smarting from the pricking of the thorns."

She showed the beautiful woman her fragile fingers which were scratched and blood-stained, then added:

"But now that I offer them to a princess as beautiful as you I forget all my pains."

This eulogy from the lips of a young girl, mingled with the scent of the roses, was so pleasing to the young woman that she paid more than the little girl had hoped for, and taking the bouquet, went on her way. The little girl without losing time rushed to the nearest department store and having purchased a piece of lovely cloth dashed out into the street.

"Ah you little lover of clothes!" Hafiz murmured, shocked.

Then the little girl entered a delicatessen store and ordered a crisp brown roast chicken.

"Ah, you little epicure . . . thief, a lover of clothes, and an epicure. So many vices at such a young age!"

Thus, growling in his throat, Hafiz returned to the main street and followed the girl. The latter scurried through winding streets and finally entered an obscure hut at the outskirts of the city and shut the door behind her. But this was an unnecessary precaution, because one could see everything inside through the holes of the rickety walls of the hut. And this is what Hafiz saw.

An old emaciated woman, wrapped up in a worn calico dress, lay stretched on a piece of matting. The girl started to open the bundles she has brought with an eagerness which was characteristic of her age.

"Come, Grandma, a little courage, try to sit up and partake of this delicious chicken. See, it's a morsel fit for a king. You must gather energy for the coming days. Meanwhile I will make a dress for you from this cloth. I can't bear to see you in that miserable sackcloth. You look so homely in it."

The girl asked a few questions of the old woman in regard to her condition. Then she rose up to leave. She had scarcely stepped out of the hut when she came face to face with Hafiz who asked her:

"Is this woman your mother?"

"No Sir, no, she is not my mother," the girl replied, frightened by the sudden encounter.

"In that case she must be a close relative of yours," Hafiz insisted.

"No, she is a distant relative of mine, Sir. It's scarcely a week since I have known her. I know nothing about her, except that she is all alone in this world and she is in distress."

"And you," Hafiz persisted with a knowing smile, "are you such a rich girl that you can aid all the unfortunates?"

"Alas, Sir, I too am an orphan. I make my living by assisting a weaver."

"Then where did you get the money to buy the piece of cloth and the roast chicken?"

The girl bowed her head and blushed. She would gladly take the stranger in on her secret but he spoke so imposingly and with the authority of a magistrate. So she spoke in a low voice:

"Sir, I am ashamed to confess it to you. To make that money I was forced to steal roses from a beautiful garden."

"But the owner of the garden, do you know him?"

"Akh! Fortunately not, Sir. Otherwise, how could I dare look in his face?"

"And yet you are looking at him at this very moment. That garden is mine."

The revelation was so shocking that the little girl started to tremble like a leaf but could not escape because Hafiz held her firmly by the hand. She wanted to kneel at his feet, to wrap her hands around it and to beg his forgiveness. But the poet, whose eyes were moist by now, said to her:

"Do not be ashamed, my child, you have understood better than I the value of my roses by using them to soothe the suffering of the hapless. Come, you shall be the loveliest rose in my garden."

"But, Sir . . ." The girl started to sob.

"No!" Hafiz ordered imperiously, "I am no longer 'Sir' to you. You must call me father. Didn't you tell me that you have no one in this world? I am infinitely grateful to my Providence for bringing us face to face in the lane of the roses. I do not possess the throne and the treasures of the Shahinshah, but I am quite well off, I am able to provide for you. Come now, open those trembling lips of yours and call me father."

"Father!" the girl choked, "but what will happen to that poor woman?"

"You and I will take care of her until she recovers her health."

And the poet and his foster child, hand in hand, headed for the most beautiful rose garden of Shiraz.

FUGITIVE FROM TYRANNY

By MARTIRO

The full name of the author of the following factual account of a life lived in the terror and privation of the Soviet Union, and as a fugitive from the USSR, for understandable reasons, cannot be divulged, nor can it be revealed where at the present moment the author resides.

I was born in the village of ———, now in Soviet Armenia, early in the 1900's.

Both my father and grandfather were orchard-keepers, and also owned a silk-worm culture plant and a mill producing silk cloth. Though we were not considered wealthy, we were yet certainly well-to-do.

When, in 1921, the unfortunate Sovietization of Armenia took place, my father was taken prisoner both as a person belonging to a party opposing Bolshevism and as the most prominent personality in our town. He was summarily exiled to Siberia. My eldest brother, a soldier of the Armenian army at the battlefield at Kars, after being betrayed by his soldiers, took his own life. As for my elder brother, who also was an officer, he too met a grim fate. Taken prisoner at the same time as my father, he was executed while a prisoner.

It was thus that the thirteen remaining members of our family—there had been sixteen of us in happier days—were left to the sole support of my mother. Both my grandparents were still alive. I had six uncles who, in turn, had many children.

My troubles began when I was a young man, with the coming of Bolshevism to our land. Being of a studious bent, I had been registered to study at a governmental school; but before the scholastic year had ended, I was turned out of the classroom as the son of a "political outlaw."

It being apparent that my "notoriety" would prevent my admission into any school in my district, I left home and took up residence with my cousin in Tiflis, Soviet Georgia. Through his aid, I was able to enter the State Technical School where I continued to study until 1925 when, unable to meet an official request that all students produce personal identification papers, I was once again classified as one of the "outlaws"—along with sons of clergymen, former officers and the so-called bourgeois—and, with thirty-four other young men, was discharged from the school.

Strangely enough, a major memory of this incident that remains with me does not concern me personally, but another of my schoolmates who was kicked out at the same time as I. This boy, Mirjan, was the son of a provincial from the district of ———. After he was turned out of school, he returned to his home haunts. Completely driven insane by his ill-fortune, Mirjan first entered the family stable and with dagger in hand butchered the livestock; then entering his home, he fell on the members of his family and cut them to ribbons. After this mad act Mirjan returned to Tiflis where he presented himself to the director of his late school. Offering that man the lethal dagger, Mirjan said: "Here, this is what you wanted me to do. Now I am not only poor, but I am an

orphan. Here is the dagger that ruined my family and my future. You can now freely accept me into your Institute. I am now thoroughly eligible!"

The hapless Mirjan was immediately arrested, bloody dagger still in hand. When he was brought before a judge some months later, it was blatantly apparent that he was insane. I shall never forget that story. For I was present when he surrendered himself to the school director—while he held the bloody dagger in his hands.

Though I had been expelled from school, I was fortunate enough at least to be handed a certificate attesting to my class and subjects studied. Armed with this slender testament, I left Tiflis for Kharkov, the capital of the Ukraine, where I joined the household of my elder married sister and her kind husband, through whose efforts I was accepted into the State Technical Institute, where I continued my studies until 1927, the year of the anti-Soviet movement in the Ukraine. There were many national organizations in every section of the country, even in the schools, and I became a member of an anti-governmental group in the Institute. A few weeks later, I was placed under arrest at my boarding house and was whisked off to a local jail where I found that I was one of the twenty-six members of my school society to have been taken captive that same evening. For ten days, they subjected me to all manner of tortures; but when they found that they couldn't force me to "inform" on myself, they clapped me into a dungeon no larger or different from a cage, a cell just about the size of the occupant. One can hardly stand in it. There is no rest, no leaning against anything, no sitting, no squatting. The prisoner stands in a pool of fetid icy-cold water which collects from water which they gradually pour over his head three times a day. No food of any kind was given at all.

My recollection is that I was conscious in that cage for ten days, after which I must have fainted away. When I came to, I found myself in a hospital.

It is impossible to describe fully what I saw in that prison. The tortures devised and applied are beyond all imagination and description. We reckoned that, daily, death visited fifty of the less hardy prisoners. As an example, we were once herded together to watch the spectacle of a young man being put to death in a very "unique" Soviet manner. They had strapped a dynamite charge to the abdomen of the young man, and had attached to the explosive an extraordinarily long fuse which swung around our huddled group. Keeping us under rifle sight so that we would observe nothing but the ghastly scene before us, they lit the fuse. Shortly thereafter, the sputtering flame reached the dynamite, there was a roar, and pieces of the young man's anatomy showered down over us. As a macabre finish, the cold-blooded guards took the hands of the dead boy and unceremoniously jammed them down into the twin apertures blasted out in his chest. It was horrible.

After my recovery, I was placed on trial and consigned to six years of hard labor. Winter had arrived. Along with my other unfortunate companions, they herded us into train wagons meant for animals and started us off to an unknown destination—nine days away. The doors were never opened during that nightmare journey. We were out of our mind, and out of sight with the world around us. On the fourth day, nine of our company mercifully passed away. On the final day, the cold became so unbearably severe that three of the older prisoners gave up the ghost. Their bodies remained there rotting away.

We finally reached our destination, in the Ivdivin region of Soviet Siberia. We were lodged in underground huts, then

transferred elsewhere, always under heavy guard, always underground, never touched by the rays of the sun. Escape was obviously impossible at the moment and we knew it.

I was put to work in an iron mine installing and repairing the cables of the mining cars. As the miners advanced forward, we dynamited the rough ground and installed cables. We worked 12 hours daily, receiving as nourishment daily 600 grams of black bread, some warm liquid supposed to be soup, and in the evenings, hot water from which we could prepare tea by using whatever sugar we might have been able to hoard which was not much, since we were given but 150 grams of the sweet substance each month for each person.

Thus passed the Winter. Spring came. It was in one of my deepest moments of despondency that I fell into the company of another prisoner, a Doctor Suren Dadian, who had been an exile for nine years, one of the earliest victims of Sovietization. Dr. Dadian was not assigned to manual labor like the rest of us, but was a sort of doctor over the prisoners. No doubt, Dr. Dadian took pity on me, saw my frightful physical and low moral condition, and invited me to his shack. He had certain privileges denied the rest of us. He had a gun and often went hunting, and was allowed to live in separate quarters.

Through my acquaintanceship with Dadian, I met still another companion in fate, Khalar Mirakian. One day, the Doctor revealed to me, in private of course, that he and Khalar were planning to escape the next day. I was invited to join with them in the attempt. I readily agreed. It was therefore decided that at 8:30 of the following evening the three of us would meet in the Doctor's shack with whatever we could safely carry, but we pledged to withhold our plans from everyone else.

At the rendezvous hour, we converged on Ayvazian's place, and speedily "took off" bearing some pelts owned by the Doctor, his rifle, a quantity of pure lard for subsistence, led by his two noble hounds. It was a terrible experience. We walked thirty-five days through the Siberian wilderness without meeting a soul. Our route took us over mountains. We trusted to the instinct of our dogs who somehow knew enough to lead us away from the valleys and the impassable snows of the low-lands. The slopes of the mountains had been cleared by the high winds, and the snow had blown down into the valleys. I became so fatigued with the journey and the hardships that many times I begged the Doctor to leave me behind, that they effect their salvation without worrying about me. But my good friend's unceasing encouragement, his infectuous spirit, his hope and warmth, enabled me to recover my assurance. I went on.

On the thirty-sixth day of our adventure, we noticed some telegraph poles on the horizon. We knew this meant we were approaching a railway. We waited for darkness. In the evening, shouldering his rifle, the Doctor headed for the nearby village, bidding us wait at a set place. Some hours later, two strangers approached us and asked us to follow them. They were villagers—kind and considerate people who took us into their homes and repaired our health with their solicitude. We stayed five days with that kind family. And while we repaired ourselves and our clothing, the boss of a freight train was contacted who promised to transport us to Kiev for a price of 100 rubles each. We were whisked into a wagon loaded with furs—a veritable chariot for us.

The train reached Kiev after seven or eight days of slow travel. We were taken off at a secondary station and the train went on without us. We had been saved

from Siberia, but great dangers still beset us.

We entered Kiev as common citizens. When, however, we saw that it would be nothing but suicide to attempt to reach Poland, the frontiers being under heavy guard everywhere because of the insurrectionary movement in the Ukraine, we decided it was wiser first to reach the Caucasus, and then make out for Persia and freedom.

Travel via passenger train was of course out of the question for us. These trains were closely watched, the passengers closely and frequently checked for authorized travel papers. We were not anxious to meet the police or the Cheka, having no papers whatsoever with us. But we learned soon that three or four times a week, a special train left for the Sanatorium, and that for some reason or another little check was made of the passengers who took it. We at once decided to board that train which was destined for a hot-springs sections of the Northern Caucasus.

But no sooner had we three taken our places in our passenger car when three Chekists confronted us. They were vicious looking characters. One of them looked once at his broad palms then at our faces. It was evident that they had possession of photographs of us and were comparing us to those pictures right then and there. Finally, they drew their revolvers and ordered us from the train. Obeying their orders, we three headed down a street under a heavy downpour of rain, followed by the armed Chekists. At that moment fate intervened. A pummeling street car bore down on us and broke up our company into two. The three of us found ourselves on one side of the rushing vehicle—with only one Chekist with us, the other Chekists were on the other side, helpless to do anything

about it. The Doctor instantly knocked down the Chekist with us and shouted the alarm to flee. The Chekist fell, but he opened fire on our company running pell-mell away. As fate would have it, the Chekists' first shot lodged itself into the head of my brave and good friend. Doctor Dadian, who instantly fell to the ground dead. Khalar and I escaped in the dark, but up to this day I don't know what happened to him. We never saw each other again.

Bewitched by the madness of escape, I considered neither direction nor distance. I instinctively sought the wilderness through which I roamed almost aimlessly—but free—until I suddenly came upon an approaching trolley line. I rested near the road bed for a while making sure that I was not being followed. When the car approached, I signaled it to stop. Thinking I was a bona fide passenger, the conductor allowed me on.

I threw myself on a bench, and sank into a blue mood. Opposite me sat three young ladies who obviously were finding something extraordinary about my appearance. They kept looking at me and whispering to each other. Finally, one of them said politely to me: "Sir, you are bleeding."

To my horror, I noticed that I was really soaked in blood, not realizing what had happened. I had been wounded by one of the Chekist's bullets. I tried to stand up, but a sharp shot in my right leg made me cry out in pain. By a superhuman effort, I finally made my way to the exit of the car, and bodily threw myself out of the moving vehicle. I preferred death in this manner to apprehension by the police and death by torture at their hands.

But die I did not. The car did not stop. I found myself in the silence of a dark and thick forest. Like a forest ani-

mal, I grovelled on all fours, looking for a safe hole. I had been saved for the second time but had lost my friend and benefactor. I was now completely on my own, with the deck stacked against me. I penetrated the woods as deeply as I could, finally found a cave, and took shelter in it. I remained there for two days, suffering from a steady flow of blood, in torture, hunger and pain. My eyes dimmed out and my body was dry from thirst. Casting aside all caution, I left my cave towards evening and slid away over the ground like a lizard. A dim light from afar gave me hope. I was able to traverse in two hours a distance that could be covered by a normal person in a few minutes. But before I reached my destination, I was met by two foresters who, upon seeing my condition, brought up a horse, placed me on its broad back, and thus led me to their dwelling.

I was unable to talk. Those kind fellows bathed my legs with hot water. We saw that I had received two bullets, both in my right leg, and both still lodged in the flesh. After I had revived a bit the next day, I told them what had happened to me. Luckily enough, the son of one of my stout rescuers turned out to be a medical student; he extracted the lead slugs, and treated my wounds tenderly until I was fully recovered. I remained for forty-five days in the home of the foresters. Having expressed the determination to make my way to the Caucasus, I was given money, forged papers, etc., by the two men, and I took a tearful farewell of them. I was able to reach Leninakan, Soviet Armenia, without further mishap, and found a safe haven in the home of my younger uncle who finally succeeded in placing me as a laborer in the State Textile Mill. My life now became somewhat normal. I worked during

the day and attended a workers school at nights.

In 1929 the government launched a campaign against the so called wealthy citizens. The curious thing about this was that, as a matter of fact, there was no such thing as a rich man in all of Soviet Russia. But we all knew that, according to the Soviet explanation, any citizen who owned anything privately was to be considered a "rich" man. Placards in screaming letters had been plastered up everywhere along the streets and on the factory walls, declaring that "The rich as a class must be eradicated." Terror entered our lives once again. The authorities ransacked the properties of the villagers and forced them to enter the collective "cultural" unions. Those who were unfortunate enough to possess some "property" were deported and their property was confiscated.

On a cold day in January, I heard that fifty families from my native village had been brought to Leninakan in open wagons and were now held at the railroad station. I hurried immediately to the station and what did I see! In an open wagon, among the families known to me, I saw the members of my own family. I had so changed that my own mother did not recognize me. I climbed aboard the wagon and wrapped my arms around my mother. The terror she had gone through had stripped her of all sensitivity. Her eyes had dried up. There were no tears in her eyes, no emotion on her face. And I saw the real cause of her insensibility. Near her lay the dead bodies of my younger brother and sister—twins, hardly ten years of age.

After a few days, a governmental service team removed the bodies of all who had perished in the journey. I stayed with my mother that day. The next day, they were told that they were free to join

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their relatives in the city; and those who had no relatives could look for benefactors! My mother and the rest of my family, very naturally, went to the house of my uncle.

After some months, the Soviet newspapers shrieked that the collectivist movement had been crowned with incredible success. But though quite pleased with the "success" of the venture, the government yet tacfully admitted its failure. The victimized remnants were allowed to return to their homes. I returned with my family to Erivan.

In Erivan I heard that hundreds of rebels fighting against the despotic Communist rule had holed up in the mountains of Zangezour. That was enough for me. I could not stand by idly and watch the ruin of my nation and family. I decided to join the rebels. I worked during the days and traveled only by night. Finally, one evening, I chanced upon a rebel band of which the local priest was also a member. I joined this group of fifty armed men. After putting up a fierce resistance for nearly a month, we found ourselves slowly being cornered. We were being subjected daily to attacks from ground and air. Our salvation lay in reaching Persia; and we withdrew in a fighting retreat, and crossed the border by passing over the Araxes River at exactly that spot where Persia, Soviet Armenia and Turkey met.

At that time, the Kurds were in the midst of a great rebellion against the Turks, and that place where they attained a foothold was a sort of supply base for the Kurdish rebels in Armenia. It didn't surprise us in the least therefore that one day we were subjected to aerial attack by Turk pilots who very naturally took our band for a Kurdish rebel group. They killed six of our men and wounded eight others. The Kurds accorded us every hospitality. Having surrendered our arms, we directed our-

selves to the Persian frontier station of Shorap-Khona where we gave ourselves up to the Persian authorities. Those worthies immediately sent us to Tabriz, capital city of Persian Azerbaijan, where we were declared free political refugees and exiles through the intercession of American, French, Italian and other consulates.

To all intents and purposes, our entrance into Persia, according to international law, should have meant complete freedom from molestation or threat by the Soviet. Little did we realize, however, that our persecution had not ended. Towards the end of 1931, the Persian government gathered together about 3,000 exiles in one station and, loading us on trains, sped us towards the Djoulfa station on the Soviet-Persian border. We learned that the Soviet had demanded the return of all political exiles in Persia, and that the Persian government had promised to accede to the request. Hopeless, embittered, helpless, some of our group threw themselves from the train and committed suicide. Fortunately, before the train reached Djoulfa, Shah Riza issued an order stopping our return to Soviet control. It later became known that this change of heart had been dictated by intercession of our friends, the consuls of various Western nations, and especially by the personal representation of His Holiness, the late Archbishop Melik-Tangian, Armenian Prelate of Persian Azerbaijan. I might add that even the personal orders of the Shah did not prevent the Soviet from trying to arrest the political fugitives and annihilate them on the very soil of Persia.

I returned to Tabriz in the middle of September and, by arrangement of Archbishop Melik-Tangian, was appointed as the Armenian teacher of the village, near the border. My friend, Tomas Pergunian had at the same time been appointed teacher at a neighborhood hamlet. On the evening of January 14, 1931, I was unexpect-

edly visited by Tomas. It was obvious that he had fled from something without even pausing to dress. What it was that had terrified him soon became evident. The glow of raging fires in the distance told the story. The Red Army, having crossed the border, had put the entire district to the torch. They were especially intent on rooting out Soviet exiles; and those whom they could not persuade to return to the USSR they killed on the spot. Like true Communists, the Red troops wreaked vengeance on the "rich" and leading village citizens, shooting them down in cold blood. It was not a moment to linger long. And although I was only half clad, Aghasi and I instantly made a dash for our safety.

We finally reached another village where we met a few detachments of the Persian Army en route to meet the Soviet invaders. We reached the hamlet practically frozen to death. Very fortunately, a local villager, experienced in such things, immediately partially buried us in temperate soil for ten hours, a most effective way, I discovered, of helping the body regain its natural warmth by degrees without shock. Tomas, however, was less fortunate than I. One of his frozen legs never revived and had to be amputated. Had he not come to me that awful night, I probably would have been murdered in my sleep.

We did not stay in Tabriz very much longer. We were led on foot to the border of Iraq, a journey of ten days. When we finally reached the guard station at D——, the Persian officer who was in charge of the armed detachment with us, announced: "Here before you is the boundary of the British colony of Iraq. You are free to go." And off they went, and there we stood. We finally entered Iraq.

Our company consisted of 42 persons. That night we continued to climb through unknown mountains. We had no arms whatsoever. At dawn, we spied some Kurdish tents, the inhabitants of which directed

us to the road to Tashtadian or Ravandouz, taking time out only to rob us and leave us naked. The inhabitants of the Assyrian village of Tashtadian welcomed us and gave us shelter, food and clothing. A non-Assyrian goldsmith of the village, however, upon hearing that we were political refugees, hurried off and informed the police of our presence. The kind villagers however hid us away in underground shelters and the police, after a thorough search, found nothing and left after a futile mission. The people testified that the goldsmith had told a big lie. As soon as the gendarmerie left the area, the indignant villagers attacked the goldsmith's shop, saturated it with kerosene and set fire to the property, himself with it. From here we went on to Mosul where we presented ourselves before the leaders of the Armenian community. They transferred us to an Armenian village near Mosul, Havriz, owned by one Levon Pasha. This man accorded us a fine welcome and supported us for one month. Later, we went on to Antivar, another small community on the Syrian frontier where we received travel permits from the French authorities to enter Aleppo, Syria.

In Aleppo, we remained for twenty days in the orphanage of the Karen Jeppe Junior College which supported 300 orphans collected from the various Arab countries. On the first of November, 1932, I was sent to serve as the Armenian teacher at ——— village, Republic of Lebanon. In July of the following year, I went on to Damascus, Syria, to work for a French engineer and contractor named ———. There I became acquainted with the native language; and when Mr. ——— wound up his affairs there, he left me the sole possessor of the hydraulic installations that serviced the French camp.

I was soon recruited into the French Army and served until 1934 in the First Squadron of the Orient. After my honor-

able discharge, I went to Jaffa and Jerusalem where I opened my own contracting business, doing work for the municipal camps. The Arab-Israeli war of 1948

forced me to seek refuge in Amman, Transjordan, and thus to abandon the fruits of my fourteen years of labor in Palestine.

That is my story.



"MUDDY - DITCH"

LEVON SARKISIAN

Early this year, the Armenian Youth Federation of America announced a "Literary Contest" open to all Armenian Americans. The following story is the First Prize winner of that contest. Mr. Sarkisian is a freshman at the University of Rhode Island, and a resident of Providence. "Muddy-Ditch" represents his first serious attempt to do creative writing.

(The life of an immigrant offspring is a hard one—he must learn many things about himself and his parents. He must learn not to be ashamed of his parents and the fact that they are "different" from Joe Brown's folks. He must learn not to be ashamed of the language of his people nor of the faulty English of his parents. He must learn that it is not un-American or wrong to be "different," to speak a foreign language, or to follow foreign customs. Above all he must learn to take pride in his name and think of it as being as American as any other. He must learn to realize that the peculiarity of his name does not mean that he is not an American, but only that he is an American of a particular heritage. This feeling of being "different," of being ashamed, may be hard to understand, but it is very real to the immigrant's child, and quite often it takes him many years to overcome this feeling of inferiority. Unfortunately, some never overcome it—these are the Italians named Peters, the Jews named Nelson, and the Armenians named Mason.)

* * *

Mgrditch Beshightashlian was a fifteen-year-old American boy, who by blood, by ancestry, was a "son of Haik," an Armenian. His name—well, that was Armenian too. In fact, it was just about the most Armenian name in the book.

Mgrditch's parents, who had escaped from the violent hell of the Turkish perpetrated massacres of 1915, wanted their son to become a peaceful man, a man of letters like his namesake. But Mgrditch could never feel the respect which his parents showed toward his name. To him it was a veritable curse. Ever since he could remember he had been ridiculed and called "Muddy-Ditch" by his classmates. It wasn't just his name—it was everything. For instance, why did Ma insist on speaking Armenian to him on the street when his friends were around, and why did she continue to do so no matter how often he answered her in English? Why did she have to wear that old-fashioned shawl all the time, and why couldn't she dress up normally and wear make-up and everything like all the other mothers? Or how about Pa? Why's he constantly fingering those beads of his?—men in America don't carry beads. And why does he have to be the only man in the neighborhood who smokes *Mourad* cigarettes—why can't he smoke *Luckies* or *Camels* like everybody else? And why the hell doesn't he wear a wrist watch like most people do instead of that gold-chained pocket watch of his? The way he shows it off, you'd think it was the only watch in the world. Gee, if they have to go picking grapes, why do

they have to do it in Mr. Morris' backyard where everyone can see them?

The American kids were always ridiculing Mgrditch about eating grape leaves no matter how many times he tried to tell them that "sarma," which was not more than stuffed grape leaves, tasted good.

The most embarrassing thing of all was pointing out Armenia on a map to some skeptic, to prove that there was an Armenia once but that it had since been taken by the Turks, the goddam Turks, and their partners of the 1920, the gosh goddam Soviets. And then there were those characters who inevitably would ask, "ARMENIAN? Oh, yes, isn't that something like Greek?" or "Tell me, is there such a language as Armenian?" or even, "Are you people Christians, or what?" Imagine that! Asking if a people, who only a quarter of a century lost over a million brethren because of their Christianity, are Christians—a people who, in fact, were the first Christian nation, and whose Bible is known universally as "The Queen of Translations."

"How much of this can a guy take?" thought Mgrditch.

Thus the seemingly obvious and inexcusable ignorance of these "Americans," coupled with the cruelty of Mgrditch's friends, led him to actually hate Perrin Street and all its denizens. At times his hatred was intensified, and he wanted to scream out, "Oh 'Hairik,' 'Hairik'! Pa! I know, Pa, I know you mean me no harm, Pa—how were you to know how cruel these 'Amerikatzis' can be! You—you're too good, Pa, too innocent, but Pa everyone's not like you—everyone's not like you—Even the teachers, even the teachers, Pa—even they purposely mispronounce my name, and make cracks about it, and they refuse to call me Michael—they say 'Your name is not Michael. If you want to change it, go to the City Hall—don't tell us about it!' Pa, what's wrong with asking them to call me Michael? After all, Michael's the Eng-

lish equivalent of Mgrditch, isn't it? If they insist on using Armenian where my name is concerned, why the hell don't they teach in Armenian too, and make things complete? You know what, Pa—those kids, Pa, my 'friends'—you know what they do? They make fun of you and Ma! They make fun of the way you talk, Pa! They do it right in front of me! They make fun of you right in front of me, Pa! Who the hell are they to make fun of you? You're a great man, Pa, a good man, too good for these 'vairenis,' to make fun of. You know Mrs. Flanagan across the street? You think she's a nice lady, don't you? Know what she called me the other day when I ran into her yard after a baseball? A 'black Armenian'—that's what! A 'black Armenian'! Pa, don't get me wrong—of course I'm proud to be an Armenian. It's just that—well, this is America, and you *do* act different—and our name—it is long, you know. You understand what I mean, don't you, 'Hairik'? We're different, and these people—they're cruel, Pa, cruel and ignorant!"

As Mgrditch grew older, things changed—he went to Classical High School, and the kids there were different, different in a lot of ways. They were much more mature, intelligent, and considerate than the gang around Perrin Street—they didn't insult him or ridicule him at all. Here, at Classical, there were students of many backgrounds, with all kinds of names, who, except for an occasional, harmless, and obviously friendly disagreement, respected each other's origin.

At Classical, Mgrditch unwittingly allowed himself to gain a reputation as a "gang leader"—indeed Mr. Morro told Mgrditch that his name had come up in the faculty meetings during discussions, and he had been described as a veritable menace, "one to keep an eye on." Mgrditch had one major fault—he had an over-strong idea of "justice." He refused to accept

undue chatisement or punishment; he demanded that the principal hear his side of the story; he tried to explain that his "reputation," based primarily on his actions as a freshman, was the major cause of his frequent trips to the principal's office. Mgrditch learned too late, that the teacher is always "right," since to question her infallibility would be to detract from the "respect" which her "position demands," and which the student body "must" have for her.

Despite his reputation, Mgrditch was recognized by many of his teachers as an intelligent student, a "thinker," with a definite skill in writing. He wrote about his people, about their hardships, their glory, their emotions, and in this he was inspired and encouraged by his composition teacher, Miss Baker, who was not an Armenian, but a Jewess.

Unfortunately, Mgrditch was financially unable to go to college, and he enlisted in the army. He had decided that he could attend college later on the "GI Bill." As fate would have it, Mgrditch was soon sent overseas—to Korea—where he fought side by side with the damned Turk, against the Mongol lackies of another enemy of his people, the Communist. For Mgrditch, millions of miles from everywhere—Providence, Perrin Street, America, Armenia—Korea was important. It was important, too, he thought, to the Koreans, all the Koreans, and to the Americans and the Soviets; it was important to everyone, even to the Turks, or so they claimed. It was especially important to Mgrditch and his people, however, because Armenia could very well have been a Korea in 1920, but the world was different then—none of her "Christian" brothers in the West, would accept the "responsibility" of helping the infant Armenian republic preserve the independence which the Treaty of Sevres had guaranteed her. Not one of the "great"

nations lifted a finger against the Turk or the Soviet, who had united to destroy the boundaries of the republic of Armenia. Thus, the Turk, with the world-shaking crime of 1915 behind him, defied the Allies to whom he had just surrendered, and under the "great reformist," Mustapha Kemal Atatürk, known somehow also as the "George Washington" of Turkey, allied himself in unholy and treacherous unity with the Soviet, and crushed the Armenian nation! This was the reward which the "Little Ally" received for her tragic loss of over one million men, women and children to the beast during the Great War. The brave soldiers of Armenia fought and died at Baku, preventing the Turko-German forces from acquiring the oil supply, which, according to the German chief of staff, von Ludendorf, spelled the difference between victory and defeat for the Central Powers—and, yet, this was Armenia's share of the victory, this was her fate, **BETRAYAL!**

But, Mgrditch was not bitter about the betrayal of his brave, but over-Christian people. Instead, he decided that he must fight for the Korean republic, that all free men must help to defend her from the Soviet, just as they should have defended Armenia thirty years ago.

Mgrditch wrote home often—he wrote in Armenian, he wrote about his plans, his ambitions, his future. He wrote about going to college and about getting married. In each letter, Akaby and Garabed Beshightashlian found a part of their son as they should have known him—they found his letters his soul, his Americanism and his "Haoutyiu"—his hooked-nose and his six syllable name, both of which he had come to be proud of, almost to the point of reverence—they saw their son, their own little "black Armenian."

One day a letter came, a letter from Washington, and as Garabed Beshightash-

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lian laboriously read that his son, Mgrditch, had been killed on January 6, Armenian Christmas Day "in the service of his country," one of the Perrin Street gang, sitting on the porch of the house at 69 Perrin

Street, asked casually of his companion, "Say, whatever happened to that 'black Armenian' that used to live here, you know—that 'muddy-ditch,' or whatever the hell his name was . . ."



A NOTE ON THE RACIAL ORIGINS OF THE ARMENIANS

KAREKIN DER SAHIGIAN, Jr.

Race: Fact and Fiction About The Armenians

Science today observes and records several *families* and stocks within them to make up the composition of the "white" racial body of mankind.

The one stock most indigenous, most common, and most exclusively and traditionally representative among those several peoples, several score millions all told, including most so-called "Arabs," some Syrians, Oriental and other Hebrews, Jordanites, and others, all popularly called "Semitic," is that element stock (of the larger family of the designation, *Mediterranean*, of the white race) which is called "Small Mediterranean." This stock is occasionally supplemented by "Atlanto-Mediterranean" and "Cappadocian Mediterranean" stocks.

Historically and presently this group alone has been the dominant indigenous strain in the most indisputable "Semitic" lands below the Fertile Crescent. The ancient Hebrews belonged fundamentally to this group, and their modern descendants still show the "Small Mediterranean" (sometimes with accretions of the "Atlanto-Mediterranean" and "Cappadocian Mediterranean") to be the dominant composite of their physical makeup, despite their undoubted absorption of strains from the 'brown,' or 'black,' race, 'yellow' race, and all other stocks and families of the 'white' race.

It is not the intention of this paper to assert any "superior" notions of any stock, family or race. Such ideas are hard to "prove," and no "proof" as yet has shown positively or even indicated one group to be "superior" to any other. Singling out the Armenians for praise does not mean at all that other peoples have not equal or even "better" attributes. The reader should bear this in mind.

It might be said, though, that during the stages of civilization, the zenith of the combined cultures of mankind has passed along from one geographical area to another. Thus, momentarily, it might appear to the more naive and unlearned that the stocks temporarily holding sway or possessing the greatest resources are those of "natural" first rank.

Now, those who would label the Armenian, "Semitic," in the racial sense are indeed guilty of a scientific and historical error or at least inconsistency. First, we shall implement the term in the lesser unscientific of two popular ideas, namely, that one which assumes that there is a prime "Semitic" race or an amalgamation and that the Armenians belong to it.

Today the most unaltered of the world's "Small Mediterraneans" dwell in Saudi Arabia. There are traces of "Cappadocian Mediterranean" and "Atlanto-Mediterranean" in this very heart of historical "Semitic"-speaking country; but the types represented here, or among the Hebrews

and other "Semites" are, practically speaking, absent in the representative native Armenian population.

True, waves of "Saracen" and other "Semitic" and Asiatic hordes swept over the land of Armenia for several centuries and destroyed or enslaved much of its non-"Semitic" population. The carrying off of 40,000 innocents in an afternoon's work to sell them for slaves in southern lands was not unusual. To some extent, the "Semitic"-speakers thereby de-"Semitized" themselves, simultaneously adding to the Armenians an infusion of "Cappadocian Mediterranean" and perhaps a trace of "Small Mediterranean" factors. In addition, the "Semitic" neighbors to the south of Armenia received other "Indo-European" or non-"Semitic" accretions to their physical composite through absorption of old Greek, Old Persian, Palesti, Hurrian, Sumerian and Crusader elements, along with accretions from ancient "Indo-European" tribal incursions from the direction of the Armenian and Persian mountains. Nevertheless, the peculiar *Mediterranean* strains characteristic of the invaders of Armenia leave their traces in only an occasional and dilute form among the Armenians, usually but not exclusively among the constituency of their population living to the West and South of Armenia Major, that is, those regions lying near or upon the old Cappadocian and Syrian frontiers, respectively. Of the Armenians apparently so infused, it is to be wondered how many of them are perhaps more truly reemergent descendants not of ancestral Armenians, but rather of Cappadocians, certain Hittite-ruled peoples, Aramaens, Babylonians, Assyrians, or other 'North' or 'South' 'Semitic'-speakers, although they have proven for themselves Armenians.

The main body of the Armenians until 1915, year of the greatest deportations and massacres, dwelt in the temperate to severe

mountain highlands of the "real" Armenia. This is the heartland region east of Erzinga and Kharpout, north of Moush, Bitlis, and Van, west of Karabagh, and south of Tiflis. Typical representatives of this more typical group show them to be practically devoid of those element stocks of the *Mediterranean* family branch which we mentioned as being found in the "Semitic" — speakers to the south of the Armenian Plateau.

In fact, those dwelling in districts most continually, traditionally, doggedly militantly, exclusively, and isolatedly Armenian tend to be taller, lighter, and more linear in their dimensions than their compatriots. These former, particularly, are as a group collectively taller than most of the nationalities of Europe; have a head size (which can be more significant, anthropometrically speaking, than head shape) considerably larger than most "Semites," Turks, and Persians, and approaching that of West Europeans; have longer-headed elements whose possessions association is closer with certain Europeans than with "Semitic"-speakers; and those whose head indexes are "typical" are far nearer related to cephalic indexes of most of Europe than to those of 'Semitic' lands. Their pigmentation collectively expressed is lighter than that of all the distinct nationalities of Southwest Asia of any size and certain parts of Europe. Kinky or curly hair and thick lips are virtually non-existent among the Armenians, and their skins are nearly always clear indicating early "race"-blending. They are taller by far than the most unaltered "Semites," and as a rule are also much coarser-featured. Their traditional language is one of the most ancient and well-preserved of all the Indo-European tongues. Linguistic borrowings are a product of economic and political intercourse of more modern times. A "Keltic," "Nordic,"

or "Keltic-Nordic" submergence in the Armenians cannot be denied.

Basically, the modern Armenians have been determined by the most scientifically authoritative studies to be a conglomeration of "Irano-Afghan Mediterranean" (also known as 'Iranian Plateau'), 'Alpine,' and 'Nordic' with basic 'Semitic' *Mediterranean* forms not evident in their heartland to any extent and present in dilute form among some southern and western Armenians, from whose numbers, incidentally, most of the Armenian-Americans and other Armenians living outside their country are drawn. The heartland Armenians are very negligibly represented outside their Armenian mountain homeland, and most of the northeastern Armenians are still indigenous to that geographical area.

The "Irano-Afghan," relatively tall and brunet, long-faced, hook-nosed, never has been genuinely indigenous to the desert or sub tropical regions of the 'Semitic'-speaking areas. Before history and to this day, it dominated and most comfortably domesticated itself in the Southwestern Asian mountain chains, homelands of "Eastern Aryan"-speakers for thousands of years. If the Armenians are to be deemed "Semitic" because their composition includes an "Irano-Afghan" strain, in especial physical emphasis since the Mendelian theory permits brunet pigment to dominate light, then, likewise, and to a greater degree, Iranians, Turcomans, many Kurds, Azerbaijani, Afghans, and others, all predominantly alien to semi-tropical Southwest Asia, must be labelled "Semitic."

However, if the reader has decided that he will dispose of the 'theory' that the 'Small Mediterraneans' are 'Semites,' because he feels that the Armenians still deserve such regard, he then must be ready to acclaim a new notion. That is, logically perhaps, he will determine to call *all the stocks of the Mediterranean fam-*

ily, and that family collectively, 'Semitic'; for at least then perhaps more than half the Armenians will fall within that classification.

In so rationalizing, however, he forgets that the 'Indo-European' continent of Europe literally abounds through flesh and marrow with *Mediterraneans* of every variety; that incidentally, the continent of Europe verily owes its civilization to the *Mediterranean* family, more than to any other.

Not only are 'Small Mediterraneans' found in Europe, in Spain, Portugal, Southern Italy, in the British Isles; but 'Atlanto-Mediterraneans,' 'Cappadocian Mediterraneans,' 'Pontic Mediterraneans,' altered 'Danubian Mediterraneans,' and the truer forms of Nordic all fit in as representatives of the *Mediterranean* family present in Europe.

1. The 'Atlanto-Mediterraneans,' absorbed in some 'Semites' and strongly present among North African 'Arabs' and 'Berbers,' and practically speaking, absent from Armenians, is found among the Welsh, Scottish, Irish, English, French, Spanish, Italians, Greeks and other Balkan peoples.

2. The 'Cappadocian Mediterranean' is found in the Balkan nationalities and is especially prominent in the Turks and Oriental (most authentic) Jews. This stock is absent from the Armenians proper though present in dilute form in a few of the modern Armenians living for centuries among the Turks, Syrians and Kurds. The Turks of today, though they might have some Mongoloid traces submerged, are today basically 'Cappadocian Mediterraneans,' a stock present in some 'Semites,' but not at home in the Armenian mountains, and an alien intrusive element in the Armenian physical makeup.

3. The 'Pontic Mediterranean' is found along the western and northern shores of

the Black Sea, in Rumania, Bulgaria, Poland, Czechoslovakia and parts of Russia. It has little connection with either Armenians or 'Semites'.

4. 'Danubian Mediterraneans' in pure form are practically non-existent. In a 'Neo-Danubian' (mixed form) they are quite prevalent in Central and Eastern Europe.

5. The relatively blond 'Nordic' stock indeed, in its purest forms, is another *Mediterranean* variety. It is assumed to be a blend of two ancient *Mediterranean* stocks, the 'Corded' and the 'Old Danubian', both of which are now extinct as stocks. Just how depigmentation, the loss of melanin, occurred, is not yet completely clear. Nevertheless, the most authoritative and objective evidence continues to mount that the 'Nordic,' in terms of derivation, measurements, and other factors, is proportionally and structurally very closely related to the 'Atlanto-Mediterranean' and the 'Irano-Afghan Mediterranean.' In fact, the 'Corded Mediterranean' component of the original 'Nordic' was perhaps most nearly related to the 'Irano-Afghan-Mediterranean'; and this latter stock is the strongest single element in today's Armenians, Iranians, Kurds and Afghans.

It seems very probable that the 'Irano-Afghan Mediterranean' is more closely related to some of rather blond English, Swedes, Danes, Germans, Scottish, and others than these of the latter are to some of their very own blond compatriots. The various blondish stocks of Northern and Northeast Europe have little in common racially except their common loss of melanin. The dominant indicants of kinship are not by any means coloring alone, nor one or two superficially notable characteristics, but a veritable host of features and forms, applied in studied connections with historical and environmental details, with some help accruing from genetics, archaeology, philology and related sciences.

He who would term an 'Irano-Afghan Mediterranean' a 'Semite,' because he is of the *Mediterranean* stocks, unconsciously or not, assumes the truer representatives of 'Nordic' are also 'Semites.' Incidentally, those varieties of 'Nordic' regularly held by the layman to be characteristic are in reality those which are less representative of truer original types, since they contain infusions from *Upper Palaeolithic* family stocks not akin to the stocks of the *Mediterranean* family. The 'Anglo-Saxon' type of the 'Nordic' contains considerable unreduced *Upper Palaeolithic* admixture, making it a taller and heavier bonded variety. The Trondelagen type contains *Upper Palaeolithic* and in addition an excess of the 'Corded' element stock. Certain Scandinavians who are 'Nordics' with a 'Corded' excess show marked resemblance to 'Irano-Afghan Mediterraneans,' which resemblances are even stronger if pigmentation differences are ignored. However it may be the 'Keltic Iron-Age' type of 'Nordic,' mesocephalic, low vaulted, with prominent nose, and hair often light brown, which is closest to the Armenian variety, although Armenian blonds are not so rare as generally supposed.

Those Armenians who despite the never-ending oppression of Turks, Mongols, 'Saracens' and others nevertheless retain much of their ancestral 'Nordic' and 'Alpine' hardly would be called 'Semitic,' and we dispense here with further discussion on that score.

We should observe, then, that though the Armenians of today are prevalently brunet, their racial composite does not compare closely with that of the least altered, hypothetical, 'Semites,' or the *Mediterranean* family in its narrowest sense, that is, the 'Small Mediterranean' stock, otherwise known as 'Mediterranean Proper' and the 'Ibero-Insular.' On the contrary, the strongest element in the Armenian makeup, the one which perhaps

appears least 'Indo-European' (and most 'Semitic' because of brunet pigmentation) and because the other components are more familiar and at home in Europe, is more closely related to the 'Nordic' than the latter is to several lightly-pigmented North European stocks.

If there be a 'Semitic' race in the narrow sense, the Armenians do not belong to it. If there be such a race in a slightly broader sense, the Armenians do not belong to it. If there be such a 'race' in the broadest sense, then half the Armenians and half of Europe belong to it. Even here, however, relationship could be doubted in that the separations in time and geography and environmental attributes have well differentiated the stocks of the larger *Mediterranean* family in respect to cultural and racial admixture. Furthermore, some stocks — as such — of the *Mediterranean* branch have never spoken a 'Semitic' tongue nor have been imbued with 'Semitic' cultural influences. If this is generally true with Armenia's 'Irano-Afghans,' it should be also true with most of the *Mediterranean* family in Europe.

Now, there is another even more unscientific popular and superficial sense by which Armenians are apt to be compared with groups supposedly 'Semitic.' This is racial characterization on the unscientific consideration of certain especially observable and obvious characteristics, such as pigmentation, nose shape, head form, and height characteristics plainly visible at first sight, hence not difficult or time-consuming for judgment.

We should make clear at the beginning that if the Armenians are to be classified as 'Semites' on the basis of individual racial one or several of the characteristics as below described, and that those called 'Semites' have among themselves considerable variety and/or may be actually defective in the very ones most erroneously granted as 'Semitic.'

First, there are those who believe, in error of course, that a large nose, especially a convex aquiline one with a depressed curving tip is exclusively and uniformly a 'Semitic' sign:

1. The ancient Hebrews and those among the 'Arabs' who are most correctly considered 'Semites,' had and have sharp, small, fine-featured faces and noses.

2. The large nose, convex or otherwise prominent, is common among Armenians. Perhaps three-fifths have such a nose which, more properly ancestral, would take a hook-bridged and non-depressed nose, besides representing furthest advancement in terms of evolution and strikingly very incident in the greatest leaders of European civilization, is almost the exclusive property of the 'white' race, and among the components most correctly prevalent in the 'Japhetic' or 'Indo-European,' group rather than the 'Semitic' or 'Hamitic' Europeans with broad, small, flat and snub noses are likely to possess an Asiatic or 'Hunish' strain. Genetic and historical evidence supports such a conjecture. Those with sharp delicate noses and features are likely to be more closely related, regardless of their pigmentation, to 'Semites' than Armenians and other 'Easterners' are.

Secondly, there are those who look, again in error, upon black hair and black (i.e. dark brown) eyes as 'Semitic':

1. These are found in practically all European nationalities. Far more than one in three Americans possess brown eyes of varying shades, many accompanied by very dark or black hair. Most of these cannot be considered 'Semitic.'

2. A general survey (Hughes) discloses that less than 18 per cent of the Armenians have true black hair, and that brown-eyed Armenians may be 'bruneticized Nordic,' 'Alpine,' and 'Irano-Afghan' and *Mediterranean* elements associated with an 'Armenoid' type. (The last named is a rather stable hybrid type, assumed to be about

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two-thirds 'Irano-Afghan and one-third 'Alpine.' It is a brachycephalized *Mediterranean* family derivative, with mixture.) The *Mediterranean* elements refer to those absorbed from Southern and Western sources, from stocks far less representative of Armenians than of many of the non-'Semitic' populations of Europe.

3. Perhaps more than a third of the Armenians proper possess light, mixed-light, or mixed-dark-light eyes. Dark brown is present in less than one-quarter and 'black' is unknown. Pigment, we have seen, means little. The genetic dominance over light by brunet, anthropometry, various blood groupings and other factors should and will be given far more thought and attention by the layman than have so far been devoted to them. For a crude example of genetics: excluding the population of the U. S., drawn from many lands, type A blood in all the continents is found most commonly in (West) Europe, and among its nationalities perhaps most strongly the Armenian.

There are those who, in ignorance of the scientific fact, look upon relatively dark skin as uniformly a 'Semitic' indicant.

1. It might not be forgotten that for perhaps three or four milleniums the hot sun in their unshaded high altitudes has beat down on the backs of the natives. Nevertheless, less than seven per cent of the Armenians have skins which may be called 'light brown.' The derivation of the ancestors of these is probably quite different from that of the vast majority.

Fourthly, some mistakenly believe a relative abundance of pilosity (hairiness) is a 'Semitic' sign:

1. Outside the 'Ashkenazic' Jew who received his hairiness from French or German 'Alpine' contributions, abundance of hair as a rule is relatively absent in the 'Semitic' *Mediterranean*. The trait is more properly applicable to the 'white' race in

Europe than to the 'yellow,' 'black,' or 'brown.'

Fifth, many share the specious view that curly to kinky hair and thick lips are 'Semitic' indicants:

1. These are both virtually non-existent among the Armenian stocks. The Armenians generally are a thin-lipped people. Most Armenians and whites' with relatively thick-lips received these not through 'Semitic' or negroid strains but from *Upper Palaeolithic* admixture.

Sixth, the back of head flattening (lack of occiput) which among more than half the Armenians is a conspicuous characteristic is by some thought in error of as 'Semitic.'

1. Though this effect upon more backward Armenians and other nationalities might be partially artificial due to traditional cradling, it is by and large the effect of a racial blending. This result is obtained not only in Armenia, but parallel results are obtained all over Southern and Central Europe.

2. Low cephalic indexes, long-heads, as such, are far more correctly the property of 'Semitic' peoples and coastal populations of Southern, Western, and Northern Europe. But some of those Armenians with longer, usually mesocephalic heads are more closely related to one another depending on the similarity of other racial characters, than with 'Semitic'-speaking long-heads, unless all are together thought of in terms of the all-inclusive larger *Mediterranean* family approach. Even then, as we have seen, the ethnological connection is remote and the above still applies.

Thus, in refutation of the second general unscientific linkage of Armenians with 'Semites,' we note that the former do not merit the term 'Semite' by virtue of shallow observation of pronounced surface

characteristics. The physical stereotypes of the 'Semite,' indeed, are fallacious.

There is a third method of identifying Armenians with 'Semites.' It is presented for the benefit of those who have been misled by ignorance into believing that Armenians resemble Jews, and these are 'Semitic,' or else the Armenians are anyway like Jews, regardless. The inception of this idea, or stereotype, which never considers closer ethnic and cultural resemblances prevail between Armenians and many Europeans and Near Easterners, probably owes itself to Ottoman or foreign diplomatic or quasi-official sources desirous of propaganda unfriendly to Armenian aspirations, potentialities, or policies. But this is only conjecture, for it may be rooted in medieval religious assumptions.

The Jews lived continually in Palestine from about 1200 B.C. to 586 B.C., approximately six centuries. The other peoples there included Amorites, Canaanites, and the Philistines, perhaps related somewhat to the Turks and Arabs of today. The original Jews coming from the east may very well have entered the land as 'Small Mediterraneans,' with a physical appearance like the Yemenis today. By the time of their first dispersion, however, they had probably accumulated some 'Atlanto-Mediterranean' from the Philistines, who had arrived in Palestine from the west probably from Crete and Anatolia, originally perhaps Dalmatia; and 'Cappadocian Mediterranean' from the Canaanites and the Amorites.

Their three major dispersions were: captivity in Babylon (586-538 B.C.), from there most of the survivors of the medieval Eastern invasions went northeastward into Persia, Turkestan and beyond; the second, into Egypt, Syria, Asia Minor (Anatolia), but mainly the Balkans and the north of the Black Sea, beginning from the time of Alexander the Great; the third, at the time of the Maccabees to 70 A.D. onward,

under the Romans, with migrations to all parts of the Mediterranean. The final union, brought about by expulsions from many European countries, occurred in Germany and Poland.

During their wanderings this socio-religious culture group picked up and added to its composite probably every strain of the 'white' race; we are not discussing Asiatic and African Jews here. 'Nordic,' 'Alpine,' 'Borrebey' elements entered their composition during medieval times. While the 'Semitic' *Mediterranean* strains still predominate, the accretions of blonder and 'Alpine' stocks have incipiently 'Noricized,' or 'Dinaricized' many Jews. Thus, some of this people outwardly tend to resemble people of other nationalities, especially those possessing 'Alpine' and 'Nordic' plus various other *Mediterranean* elements. Any mutual resemblances are, therefore, purely coincidental. There is no connection, be it cultural or historical. The 'relationships' are neither parallel nor derivative, and are not connected in time or space. There is reason to believe, if some Armenians (or other nationals) seem to resemble some Jews, or vice-versa to be proper, that the very opposite of parallelism of development is the reason. That is, there lurks an assumption that, thanks to the continual ravage of Armenia, the Armenians have become more bruneticized and less 'European'-appearing, or their 'Nordic' and 'Alpine' at least have been submerged. Meanwhile, the Jews, who began as nearly full brunet Mediterraneans, have been depigmenting themselves for nearly three millenniums. The Armenian highlands most traditionally have been more the home very probably, not of *Mediterraneans* but of the 'Alpine' race, which dwells between France and the Pamirs.

The ancient and modern 'Sephardic' and 'Ashkenazic Jew' and the Hittite never were 'Armenoid.' (In Hebrew writings, 'Ashkenaz' refers to a region in Asia Minor

near Istanbul and also to Germany.) However, the incipient 'Dinaricization' in Europe of most Jews of the 'white' race into the 'Ashkenazic' type sometimes has given them a 'pseudo-Turanid' or 'pseudo-Armenoid' appearance. While there are some 'Ashkenazic Jews' with high brachycephaly and convex noses, there is not enough 'Alpine' in the conglomerate to make the 'Dinaricization' prevalent or standard. Those of the opinion that an 'Armenoid' appearance of some 'Ashkenazic Jews' is due to Hittite admixture or a sojourn in Asia Minor reveal their misconception of Jewish history, Hittite ethnology, and the nature of the 'Armenoid' stock. Any apparent similarity is an individual rather than a group phenomenon. In Europe, individual Jews may resemble 'Borrebey,' 'Nordic,' 'Noric,' 'Dinaric,' 'Alpine,' 'East Baltic,' 'Neo-Danubian,' 'Ladogan,' partially 'Mongoloid,' 'Mongoloid' individuals as well as those who are primarily 'Atlanto-Mediterranean,' 'Cappadocian Mediterranean,' 'Small Mediterranean' in blend.

(In the United States, where the 'Ashkenazic' type of the several types of Jews prevails most predominantly, are also located, far out of cross-sectional proportion to their total numbers, those very Armenians who would, of their national group, relatively most tend to resemble certain of this 'Ashkenazic' body, due to the geographic derivation and other selective factors of these Armenians. Thus, a minute number of Jews might tend to resemble speciously, more probably in the United States than anywhere else, by coincidence entirely, as noted above, an actually minute proportion of all Armenians.)

Stereotypers, however, naive enough to compare all Armenians with 'Semites' are guilty of unscientific views. Larger ratios of either of these peoples more nearly correctly tend to resemble, again coincidentally and superficially, larger ratios of other peoples than they do components of

each other. These other larger groups of Armenians and Jews are in isolated locations and do not lend themselves readily for comparison. Probably larger clusters of Jews tend to resemble larger groups or proportions of certain Spaniards, Italians, French, Germans, Poles, Russians, Lithuanians, Slavs, Turks, Greeks and various 'Arabs,' than Armenians. Meanwhile, larger clusters of this nationality, drawn from their more 'typical' representatives, undoubtedly show closer resemblances with most or all of the following, when mutually compared in all ethnic details: Circassians, Mingrelians, Georgians, Abkhaz, some Turks, Ossetes, Azerbaijani, some Russians, Tats, Iranians, Lurs, Kurds, Italians (north and south), French (north and south), Serbians, Macedonians, Cretans, Cypriotes, Druse, Ukrainians, Greeks, Bulgarians, Rumanians, some Slovaks and, of course, Albanians, to name a few, excluding not a few extinct nationalities.

Where, in those rare cases among individuals an apparent 'strong resemblance' is seen, it is probably due to a facial expression, not unknown to anthropological science. The 'Jewish look' may on rare occasions resemble one type of *sadness* of eye expression found on a negligible number of Armenians. Even in these 'closest' cases of resemblance, there is still no foundation for an ethnic connection, and anthropometrical tests do not substantiate the relation. Inter-marriages of Armenians with Jews or other non-Christians is exceedingly rare, probably rarer, with them than most other nationalities. The endogamy of the Armenians is widely known.

To infer that the Jews brought to Armenia at the time of Tigranes to construct an economy for the Armenians made any sort of cultural or ethnic contribution during their brief transitory stay (except for a negligible minority) is very unlikely. Similarly, to infer that representatives of

this people later became rulers of the country (e.g. Bagratounis) impresses negatively those woefully few students profoundly familiar with the history of Armenia, especially its cultural, social, and religious traits and zeal and intense nationalism. Jacques de Morgan's very fine concise history of the Armenians explains the character of the more ancient Armenians, and his assumptions deserve study. Most of the transients were carried off into Persia, were cut down by the 'Arabs' or Mongols, or migrated into the Caucasus, Turkestan and Khazaristan, thence in large part to Russia and Europe. The paradox is that in their devout Christian beliefs and sentiments, too much false connection has been for centuries ascribed by Armenians themselves to the Biblical peoples and their supposed influence in Armenia. One following this pattern is naive to the philosophic whims and idiosyncracies of traditional religious historians and native chroniclers and the atmosphere of the times in which they wrote. These philosophies in written form, concerning Armenian Biblical connections, very substantially replaced the older epics and legends, now virtually lost forever. That essence from these philosophies lingers is observed by Armenian church clergy, who to this day are prone, by 'custom,' to adopt Biblical surnames from the Old or New Testament or their own Saints. Devout Christians in much of Europe have also followed this 'tradition.'

To search for cultural connections between Armenians and Jews is also futile, unless we connote the above to mean such a condition, or to admit that tragic circumstances have been rather common to them (and hundreds of millions of others of this era and all ages!) Indeed, the Jews, who are basically a religious-cultured body rather than a homogeneous nationality in the well-knit sense, have more in common with perhaps many nations and/or per-

sonality clusters within them. Someday perhaps stereotypers will lump them with groups more appropriate for mutual comparisons. Meanwhile, since nations as well as individuals are products of experiences as well as heredity and environment, the social psychology or behavior patterns of the two groups have not been and are not mutual since stimuli and responses have not been alike. However, this is a subject in itself, lying in the arena of psychology.

In closing this sub-discussion, *designed solely to 'defend' Armenians from stereotypes of any kind*, we might mention that the Old Testament of the Jews (and others) clearly draws the geographical like among 'Japhetic' (Indo-European) and 'Semitic' and 'Hamitic' peoples. These lines are, as interpreted by modern research, remarkably accurate. The Armenians lie with most of Europe in 'Japhetic' country, the lands of the 'Fertile Crescent' are 'Semitic,' the regions of Ham are mostly in Africa. Haik of the Armenians was the son of Togarmah, the son of Gomer, the son of Japhet, who was a son of Noah. Togarmah appears as a Biblical name for Armenia and Germany. Gomer is Scythia. Skeletal remains in Armenia show a definite relationship with Scythian, Danish, Gallic, and British Isles Iron Age crania, and strongly support the contention that before the Urartians, Hurrians and Khaldians, Armenia was a 'Nordic' country, whose people perhaps were closest related to Danish 'Nordics.' Togarmah, father of Haik, was a brother to Ashkenaz, Riphath, and perhaps Tiras. The first relates to a region in western Asia Minor, also to Germany, and to Scandinavia. Riphath relates to northwestern Asia Minor or perhaps the region between Austria and the Adriatic Sea. Tiras, who may have been rather the father of Togarmah, and still son of Gomer (in which case Togarmah would be come grandson of Gomer) is obviously

Thrace, although Phrygia is often marked Tiras.

Racial Summary

1. If there be a prime 'Semitic' race or amalgam, the Armenians proper, whether brunet or not, do not belong to it. Neither are they 'Small Mediterraneans,' 'Semites' in the hypothetically narrowest sense; nor this stock in association with 'Atlanto-Mediterraneans' and 'Cappadocian Mediterraneans'; 'Semites, in a slightly broader sense.

2. If one calls Armenians 'Semitic' because they belong as a blend predominantly to the *Mediterranean* family, then he must apply that same designation to most of Europe

3. Racial categorization of the Armenians as 'Semitic' based on the superficiality of easily visible characteristics is as ridiculous as it is probably commonplace.

4. To relate Armenians to the 'Semites' through the 'Jews,' or to the 'Jews' themselves, is as fallacious as it is remote.

5. These conclusions may be supplemented by the overwhelming testimony of certain ancient historical writings by Armenians, Greeks, Romans, and (pre-) Biblical accounts, attesting to the non-'Semitic' origination of the natives of Armenia. That they are chiefly descended from a host of 'Indo-European' or non-'Semitic' people (also non-'Asiatic'), including Khurrian, Khaldian, 'Hiasian,' Armeno-Phrygian, Scythian, Cimmerian, Kaska, Mushki, northern 'Mitanni' ruling elements ('Indo-Aryans'), Kassites, northern 'Hittites,' (Khatti and 'Hittite proper'), is proven by these writings, by skeletal remains, by archaeological sources (written and unwritten), and by an oncoming potent evidence of geneticists.

Culture: Where Fit True Armenians

But, truly, that which ought to be recognized should not be the appearance but the thinking and the acting of a being or a group. The culture or ethos of a unit should merit the greater consideration and

emphasis rather than race, the more or less superficial physical aspect.

Two broad culture patterns at once present themselves to those who tend to look at the 'white' race from this perspective rather than from the racial point of view.

These are the so-called 'Aryan,' or 'Indo-European,' or occasionally 'Japhetic,' and the so-called 'Semitic.' Those who apparently lost their argument attempting to justify Armenians as Semites, now, if their propaganda would succeed, will refer to them as 'Semites' by virtue of cultural and geographical proximity to the 'Semitic' area. The retort to this is indeed potent.

Disregarding here a scientific discussion of whether ever there was a single 'Aryan' people or closely-knit 'Aryan' point of view, we approach these terms as the public consumes, digests, and distributes them, as the discreet method of propaganda promulgate or disclose them.

To the public, whether realized or not, the 'more genuine Aryan' appears as the depigmented *Mediterranean* with sharp, straight, handsome features, democratic, brave, god-fearing, adventurous, gentlemanly, a freedom-loving sportsman.

The 'Semite,' on the other hand, more often is visualized as an oily-looking bully-coward, a shrewd and dishonest business dealer, dark, villainous, kinky-haired, cruel, unaesthetically proportioned, unshaven, bulbous-nosed. This is nonsense, of course.

Wherein fits the Armenian?

Social scientists conclude that only certain ancient tribes of southwest Asia, including some Armenian ancestral or ancestrally-related stocks, properly merit the 'Aryan' appellation. Though for the sake of the public, we expand it in the broadened popular sense to include most of Europe, present home of 'West Aryans,' perhaps not half the Europeans even then deserve application of that term.

The Armenians, however, culturally, are perhaps more qualified representatives than

most of Europe. Having been from the very earliest times vigilant towards the preservation of their faith, their language, and other cultural elements alien to surrounding peoples, they have perhaps lived up to the 'Aryan' credo, if ever there was one, more than most other 'Indo-Europeans,' who, in history, found it less necessary to be vigilant against alien influences.

Research indicates that the probably earliest historical 'Aryan' state, where the system of military and social caste, aristocracy derived, was conceived in the mountain fastnesses of central Armenia. From that area four milleniums ago, perhaps the development of the finest trained warriors, finest 'Arabian' steeds, chariots, and iron weapons combined to propel those dynamic military storm invasions which overran all southwest Asia into Egypt therein establishing the famed dynasties of 'Armenoid'-like rulers. Perhaps it was these early cultural 'inventions' which projected the Iron Age 'Nordic' migrations which surged forth mostly westward towards Europe. We can only guess and await more evidence. The population of Northern Armenia at that time was avowedly manifestly Iron Age 'Nordic,' which element is yet submerged in the Armenians and gave them their magnificent 'Indo-European' language, which, in its ancient 'grabar' form, has preserved itself more faithfully than almost any other tongue of that whole group. Iron Age 'Keltic Nordic,' incidentally, remains the binding and unifying element of the population of the British Isles, and very striking linguistic connections are obvious between their Old English and the 'Old Armenian.'

Most of the Armenians are the direct heirs to the ancient culture which logically had its roots in the highest mountains of west Asia and southeast Europe. For in high mountains and forests, gorgeous valleys then abundant in vegetation amid rugged seasons of climate and sharp

contrasts to the senses might most likely best develop the 'Aryan' ways of independence, freedom, individualism, imposed courage and bravery, democracy towards strangers imperiled by the environment, love for lordship over the soil upon which the mountaineers might take pride from craggy heights.

Here in prosperity and duress, so governed by climate and soil, might so appropriately have fitted the pantheons of 'Indo-European'-type gods, and so aptly have been recognized love of soil and appreciation of, and philosophy for, the warmth of the heat and light of the sun, as against the gloom, or darkness, or evil without it. Here the laws of survival most prominently played their role, and the spirit of adventure might figure most sharply. Here, amid vast natural resources, was there room for creative talents, individualism, idealism. Here on the brotherlands of severe climate and mountain ranges and the sub-tropical of strange and unusual civilizations on the plains might ideally have been drawn the cultural and social lines between the semi-civilized mountaineers and the strange town dwellers and their business operations in the older civilizations to the 'Semitic' south, despite relative geographical proximity. For centuries of ancient history little definite reference is made to Armenia and other mountain lands, especially because they were out of range or touch with the more developed civilizations of Babylonians, Assyrians, non-'Semitic' Sumerians, and others.

What has been imagined above, then, as description of the ancient 'Aryan' population of Armenia applies well to the Armenian farmer and mountaineer of recent history. True, a few of their brethren may have been driven by constant oppression to a new start in cities of other lands and become de-nationalized. They likely have become generally esteemed honest businessmen and professionals (and only a com-

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paratively few 'rug dealers'). But more than 85 per cent of the nationality still take to the plow and the pasture, or garden and vineyard, and they especially bear generously of the essence of the traits outlined. They have proven their fighting mettle and prowess against greater numbers a thousand times over against every conceivable type of adversary; and deep down they have the fear if not the respect of their opponents, ancient, medieval and modern. Sheer power, of alien numbers alone has caused them to succumb to the most hideous kinds of ordinary character-wrecking oppression. True sons of Haik, they are blessed with independence (and perhaps too much of this!), individualism, hospitality, dignity, honor, high morality, pride of soil, and courage. Probably many of their most militant, most handsome, and most noble, are gone, especially at the hands of the 'Arabs,' 'Mongols,' 'Seljuks,' 'Ottomans,' 'Tartars,' though: occasionally from their own extremes of excessive independence. Yet, after all their usually defensively battles as the easternmost bastion of 'Western Civilization,' thanks to which, largely, Pierre is still 'French,' Winston remains 'English,' and Herman is yet 'German,' enough remains either with or within them to convince the observer on the scene of their non-'Semitic' attributes and character.

From another approach, the major Armenian cultural traits are seen as not of 'Semitic' origin or inspiration. Armenian literature, poetry and music generally, their art, mythology (Norse and 'Indo-Aryan' connections), architecture (original Gothic inceptions and independent distinct styles), animal husbandry (anciently, world's finest sheep, horses), horticulture (probable origination of several fruits, vegetables, grains, beverages), metallurgy — all have an Old Armenian essence to them or, if in part borrowed, derived usually from the 'Aryan' Hellenes or Iranians.

Says Armenian poet Chobanian: "There is comparatively more restraint, more clarity, and purity of expression, in Armenian art than in the complex and sensuous art of most other peoples, especially that of the 'Eastern Moslems,' and historian de Morgan adds: "The reason is that the Armenian soul is Aryan and responds to that breath of heaven it received at its birth, for the flame that burns within it is the same flame which gave the Hellenes both Phoebus and the Muses."

Even the religion of Christianity, on the surface apparently so much of Hebrew morality, takes its initial roots from Old Persian, Old Greek, and especially Sumerian sources, all non-'Semitic'. Hebrew law and religion, chief apparent claims of that cultural group to greatness, are very largely not of their own incipient origination despite of the *dramatis personae*. The Christianity of the Armenian Apostolic National Church endows the people with a spiritual side of character, whereas the Islam of the 'Semites' lends itself historically to the rationalization of sensuality as appropriate. That cultural trait of an especial religious consciousness among the Armenians early manifested itself in some of the initial creative steps of the Protestant movement. Some of the earliest Protestants were Armenian Paulicians; some of the earliest rulers to have Protestant leanings were Armenians also, such as Leo the Iconoclast.

There are other divergences in culture. The Armenian language, in its ancient 'grabar,' is one of the finest survivals of old 'Indo-European' speech. Whether it is finally adjudged 'West Aryan' or 'East Aryan,' it relates to the families and tongues of that extensive body, from Sanskrit to Old English, standing closer perhaps to Greek, Iranian, Balto-Slavic, and Celtic. 'Semitic' tongues, if one knows them at

all as spoken from Iraq to Ethiopia, are strangely and vastly different.

The political organization and administration of Armenians was traditionally that of princes, governors, and other familiar titles and forms, and this and social procedures, family customs, military techniques and tactics, are probably more closely recognizable to the other 'Indo-European' groups than to the 'Semitic.' Armenian political and church government have traditionally been separate.

Armenian cuisine has few profound connections with that of 'Semitic' or 'Islamic' peoples; while on the other hand, in a substantial number of cases, it compares with North European. Basic commodities of the diet are lamb and wheat. Vegetables of temperate climates are grown, and dehydration has been practiced perhaps for centuries. In the country, whose climate is more like Poland's than Mesopotamia's, foods produced and recipes prepared and animals raised and eaten, are more differentiated from Southern neighbors than one would expect, after temperature, precipitation, soil, topography and religious and gustatory habits are considered. With little medical doubt, it may be said that one of the very healthiest diets is that of the Armenian, with his wheat, lamb, cabbage, tomatoes, peas, spinach, delicious melons, raisins, nuts and matzoon (yoghurt). Perhaps this is a minor reason why this people are physically healthy and so often have muscular, athletic, healthy physiques. While some elements of Armenian and other European 'cultures' derive from the 'Semitic' south, it cannot be said that the great medieval civilization of the 'Arabs' was completely their own achievement.

Of course, in the deepest and broadest sense, 'culture' of any nation, anytime, anywhere, is probably not essentially its own, but the extent to which it has not copied

from abroad during its existence partly depends upon its own creative resources, both man and material, plus the elements of necessity and reward. One could say fairly accurately that the Armenians and their ancestors have created, comparatively speaking, much of the 'culture' in which they live. In this, they differ from groups whose 'cultures' as such are relatively restrictedly theirs, in the sense that the overall pattern is theirs, whence upon a little further examination substantial external adoptions are to be inferred. But, as before mentioned, more penetrating breakdown and analysis of even more homogeneous 'cultures' would suggest tendencies of selective borrowings though not perhaps so strong as those of more definite hybridization. Meanwhile, Islamic Turkish and 'Semitic' Jewish might be cited as 'cultures' of relatively extreme hybridization and heterogeneity. The latter, basically at least in its overall pattern's modern trend, suggests antithetical relationships with the 'Indo-European' fundamentals; while the Armenian, in its true form in contradistinction, is ancestral to the 'Indo-European' and aligns with it.

The 'Semite' has been briefly described as he appears to the uninformed and malicious. Armenians so appearing in the mind's eye have been extremely few; but these, nevertheless, as exceptions, have been made prominently visible since they fall prey, for propaganda and public opinion purposes, especially to unscrupulous political, economic, and perhaps other interests dedicated to the prohibition of their collective national honor, respect, and eventuating sovereignty. Usually such as these as do appear have been the most de-nationalized elements and generally are migrants far from their own soil. They tend to possess characteristics most needing of spirituality, faith, loyalty, patriotism, trust and frequently refinement. Yet, in probably al-

most every case, the final and ultimate responsibility or 'blame' squarely rests on the degenerate shoulders of those alien tyrants who for so long misruled and mistreated them, destroying their idealism, ruining their faith or moral convictions, or perverting them, rooting in them the need for revenge in some guise or form, prompting them to think of naught but self-preservation at any cost, and if everlastingly robbed of soil and natural resources, to depend on the native intellect and become sharper than the oppressor: thus, to possess portable resources in the shape of the mind and naturally applicable, in view of the above, in more commercial endeavors. All this and the ignorance of aliens projected them and other Christian 'rayah' to commercial pursuits. However, some of

the 'blame' for their unfavorable qualities goes to 'brother Christian' bloodless betrayers from other lands, persons and interests far more profoundly corrupted in their principles.

Armenians when true to the best that is in them may stand among the finest examples of the better virtues of the 'Indo-European' phenomenon. Their attitude is one of recognition as equals only. Any deflections or deviations by individual Armenians from these virtues owe themselves to centuries-old depredations by bloodthirsty tyrants who in their unbridled lust for power and self-indulgence utterly destroyed the higher civilizations of now extinct states and changed perhaps forever the lofty reputations of an honored people.

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2. Accadian Literature.
3. Royal Egyptian inscriptions.
4. Tell-El Amarna letters.
5. Ras Shamra tablets (northern Syria).
6. Aramaic inscriptions.
7. Hittite records at Boghaz-Keui (near Ankara).
8. Letter of Tuisraata (1390 B. C.) to Anenophis IV of Egypt.
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10. Cappadocian texts.
11. Some Urartuan inscriptions (near Nor Bayazit, Soviet Armenia).

Unwritten archaeological sources:

1. Seals.
2. Pottery and relics.

* Excludes ancient sources such as Herodotus, Strabo, Hesiod, Xenophon, Moses of Khoren, Pliny, Ptolemy, the Achaemenian inscriptions of Behistun, Iran, Agathangelos, the Holy Bible; and many modern sources, e.g., A. Meillet, Dolens, Hratch, Aslan. Excludes philological and related sources.

WHAT CAN I DO WITH THE SPIRIT ?

ARSHAK CHOBANIAN

It was one of those delightful winter Sundays when the weather is just cold enough to make the temptation of staying at home irresistible. In the lower storey little room, in the intimate security of the lukewarm air now tingling with the warmth of a hot stove, two little brothers who had been left alone were preoccupied with the idols of their childish world. Zarmair, the elder, seated before a table, was reading a history book, completely immersed in a land of legends. Tiridates, the younger, was busy with his toys in front of the window. He seemed to be dead in earnest, as if he was working on a highly important project.

Suddenly a doleful song broke out from the end of the street. Strains of a heavy voice were shooting a mournful dirge which, wafted on the wind, broke down into small shreds and disintegrated in the air. Tiridates dropped his toys and listened. The voices came closer, a whiff of incense penetrated inside the room bringing with it the savor of the church. Presently, he saw the procession, with crosses, candles, and black-clad men. It was a funeral procession.

Tiridates gazed at it in wonder. It was the first time in his life he was witnessing such a spectacle. He could not understand it, and instinctively, with the insatiable curiosity typical of the child, he cried out:

"Hey Zarmair, come here, what is this?"

"Ah, it's just a dead man," Zarmair murmured and resumed his reading.

Tiridates kept looking, completely enthralled. The black-clad men kept coming from the extreme end of the street, the cross held high above their heads, marching to the tune of a mournful dirge.

"A dead man," Tiridates murmured. The emotion stirred in him was not fear but a sort of uneasiness at something which could not be understood — the emotional disturbance in the presence of the unknown.

"What is a dead man? What does it mean?" he asked.

Zarmair dropped the book. The question was too funny. He chuckled at the ignorance of his little brother. And he explained it to him.

"These men are taking to the cemetery a man who is dead. That man will no longer live, no longer will walk in the world, never eat, never speak, and will never see again."

Tiridates listened with popping eyes. The toy in his hand dropped on the floor.

"What! That man will never walk again?"

"No, they are going to bury him in the earth, they will put a stone on him. And the worms will eat his body. His eyes, his hands, his feet will drop and decay. Only his bones will remain."

"Is that what will happen to every man? Is that what will happen to me?"

"Yes, to you, to me, to our Daddy and Mommy too, to every man."

An enormous terror filled the little heart of Tiridates, and the new realization having for the first time clashed with the idea of

annihilation was crushing him. He no longer could stand it and began to cry out of sheer fear.

Zarmair came closer to him, amused by his fear

"Are you crazy, Tiridates?" he asked assuringly. "There is nothing to fear. We have plenty of time yet before we die."

Tiridates kept crying disconsolately. It seemed his heart was broken, as if he had lost one of his toys. Hearing his cry, his mother rushed down to his side. Seeing her, Tiridates cried even more bitterly, he threw his arms around her neck, and snuggling his head against her cheek he sobbed:

"Mommy, I understand you and I will die, we no longer will walk, no longer will speak. Is that true?"

Zarmair told his mother what had happened, and she, deeply disturbed, pressed the child to her bosom and smothered him with her kisses.

"Do not be afraid, my child," she whispered, "after we die we shall live again. After we depart from this world we shall go to

another world. Our bodies will die, but our souls will go to the other world."

Tiridates stopped crying.

"The souls?"

He thought for a moment, then asked, "You mean to tell me only our souls will go to the other world? What about my head? What about my hands? What about my feet?"

"They will remain in the earth. Only the soul will go to the other world."

At this little Tiridates burst out in true despair:

"What? You mean to tell me I shall never see my Mommy again? Never hold the hand of my Daddy? I shall never walk? Never eat food? What shall I do then? What can I do with the soul?"

And once again, he burst into tears, a fierce, deeply-felt, and hopeless cry. And the mother could find no answer to her child's questions. She too felt that her eyes were getting moist.

(Translated from the Armenian by J.G.M.)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Literary critic, author and translator, Arshak Chobanian is recognized as a master of Armenian letters who introduced a new era of Turkish Armenian literature during the latter half of the 19th century. For long years he was editor of the periodical *Asabid*, published in Paris. While in Paris, he rendered invaluable services to the parent people by introducing the riches of Armenian literature to the Europeans through his prolific translations, foremost among which is his translation of *Nabaget Koucbak*, the famous Armenian minstrel of the Middle Ages. In addition to his numerous works in Armenian, he also translated into French the following works: "Les Massacres d'Arménie," "Poemes Armeniens anciens et modernes," "L'Arménie, son histoire, sa littérature, son rôle en Orient." At present Arshak Chobanian lives in Paris.

Three Poems:

LEVON MARC NAZLIAN

REPORTED -- MISSING

Dedicated to all the wives, mothers, and sweethearts of the men in our
Armed Forces

*Long is the night my beloved
one.
I weep, wondering where you
might be.
Is the breath of life still in you?
They say there is a chance, you
see.
With hopes and fears inter-
mingling,
My heart is wracked with
pain.
Oh my darling . . . hear me!
Will I see you, ever again?*



A SUPPLICATION

*Blessed be the day,
When we shall see
The power of divine love
Set all mankind free
When hatred and bitter strife,
And anguish and despair
Are banished from this life,
'Till lo . . . the trumpets blare.*

*Speed, Oh God, the hour,
When lasting peace will reign;
And these evil days will pass.
Never to plague us again.
Spare us further from hellfire's
blight.*

*Have we not been thoroughly
chastened?
Heed Thy children's cry in the night
And grant, Oh Lord, the end
be hastened.*



RASCALITY PLUS

*Neither age, nor accumulated
reason,
Are immune from cupid's
mischievous acts.
His forays ignore both circumstances
and season,
And make sport of convention,
and sober facts.*

Th
Ame
tive a
depo
homo
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age a
broth
out t
Seve
Dam
who
of he
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O

ONE MONTH IN TURKEY

B. KUSHIKIAN

A NOTE

The author of this series of articles is an American citizen of Armenian birth. A native of Sebastia, Turkey, before the Turkish deportations of 1915, in 1911 he left his home town of Kovtoon Village for Istanbul and from there he came to America at the age of 15. He lost his parents and his two brothers in the deportations which wiped out the entire populace of his home town. Seventeen years later, while accidentally in Damascus, he came across one of his sisters who had come from Ourfa to Syria in search of her relatives. Earlier, in 1925, he had discovered his other sister and had brought her to America.

In June of this year Kushikian left for the old country with the intention of visiting his home village of Kovtoon. Taking advantage of the Turkish Government's permission for temporary visits to former residents of Turkey, in Beirut Kushikian completed the necessary red tape for travel and on June 18 he set out on his long trip from Beirut. Having spent one week in Aleppo he crossed to Turkey and for one month he visited the villages of Sebastia, closely studying the general situation and getting acquainted with the remnants of the deportations. He told his story to the editors of Aztak who published it in subsequent issues of their paper. Following is the story of Mr. Kushikian

• • •

On June 18 I set out from Aleppo. Dur-

ing the course of my travels everywhere I was struck by the picture of general poverty. The peasants generally were ill clad. The places I went through I found the coffee houses crowded with unemployed attendants. One does not notice great changes in the cities and the villages. Construction is exceedingly sluggish. On the other hand, great impetus has been given to agriculture. The entire Cilician plain from Giavoor Dag to Gathma is well cultivated and generally yields a good crop. The cultivation of the cotton industry has been greatly improved.

The sanitary condition of the people is still primitive. Filth everywhere. Even in trains one sees things which show how backward the Turkish people are. Thus, it is a common sight in first class coaches when a passenger will fling the rind and the seed of watermelon on the seats, and bread crumbs on the floor of the aisle. A second class passenger is often seen occupying a seat in a first class coach. And although the trainmen try to be strict and agreeable, still they avoid enforcing the law. One sees a sort of bullying everywhere and in every field of activity. The enforcement of the law seems difficult at present in Turkey.

The people are content with the present Democratic government and have great expectations from it. All speak with an air of awe and terror of the repressions of the Khalk regime. The charm of the Demo-

cratic Party is on the wane. The struggle between the two parties is very intense, having divided the people into two antagonistic camps everywhere.

Military Concentration

The first thing which strikes the attention of the traveler in the interior provinces is the unusually large number of the soldiers. One meets them everywhere, in the streets and in the public places, all of them very poorly clad. This is especially true of Adana and Sebastia. The Turkish government pays great attention to the education of the soldiers. In all military centers the soldiers receive regular lectures on military and other matters.

One cannot help but notice the deep-rooted hatred which the Turkish soldiers cherish toward the Soviet Union. On the contrary, they are very sympathetic in their expressions toward America and England. The officers spare no effort to keep the soldiers ready against any probable attack from Russia. Despite their poor military equipment, however, the morale of the Turkish soldiers seems very high and his discipline is excellent. The soldiers, in their turn, seem pleased with the Democratic Party and are hopeful that their lot will be greatly improved by the new administration.

Almost in all parts of Turkey one sees military air bases. The last one which was started in Sebastia is almost completed. This is regarded as one of the greatest air stations in Turkey. Six American technicians supervise its construction. All the expenses are provided for by the Americans. The station is on the immediate skirts of the city, and as we have stated, it is purely for military purposes. It will be ready for operation in a few months.

Despite the prevailing economic low state Turkey pays exceptional attention to the construction of the roads with a view to facilitating transportation. A beautiful

macadam road 375 kilometers long connects the cities of Sebastia and Caesaria. Generally speaking, it is American machines and American technicians which carry on the reconstruction of the roads.

Armenians in Caesaria and the Environs

Piercing through the beautiful and spacious plain of Cilicia the train climbed the Mountains of Bozanthi and reached Caesaria from which place I planned to motor to my native town. I could feel the surge of a wave of impatience welling in me and my heart kept pounding as I came nearer. An unknown power kept stirring my entire being and an irresistible affection attracted me to the places where I spent my childhood dream days.

In Caesarea my first job was to find an Armenian and to get acquainted with the condition of my kinsmen. Caesarea is a desolate city at present with a population which scarcely numbers 25,000. One seldom sees here modern buildings as we are accustomed to see in the United States. Unsmiling inhabitants, most of whom frequent the coffee houses—the rendezvous of the idle and the unemployed who spend their time in smoking, sipping coffee, and discussing world politics. I went through the streets, in vain seeking a tradesman or a businessman who speak the Armenian language. All of them speak Turkish. Finally I found Father Haikazoun Karapetian, the gift of Providence to my luckless and ruined compatriots. I immediately found myself in a warm native atmosphere in his presence. The Father gave me detailed information in regard to the condition of the Armenians in Caesarea and the environs, their economic, national, and spiritual standing and their immediate pressing needs. Soon I came in contact with many other compatriots all of whom told me the same things.

At present there are 2020 Armenians in Caesarea, almost all of them adherents of

the *Loussavorchakan* Church, namely the Armenian Apostolic Church, as distinguished from the Protestants and the Catholics. They have a church where they hold services on Saturdays and Sundays. On other days the priest generally is absent from the city, visiting the villages and comforting his flock. Although they all speak the Turkish language, nevertheless they are all true believers and when services are held the church is crowded, the same church which the Turks occupied for long years and only a few years ago returned it to the Armenians, thanks to the indefatigable efforts of Father Haikazoun. For more than 25 years this church was reduced to a storehouse of the Turkish government. During that entire period our Armenian compatriots went without a house of prayer. As a matter of fact, they could not even think of a prayer house since the Turks invariably ridiculed and persecuted religious sentiments and church ceremonies on the part of the Armenians. The other churches and school buildings have all been occupied and converted into storehouses by the Turkish government.

A small episode will illustrate this religious prejudice on the part of the Moslems. Last year, one morning the church bell which had been doomed to silence for long years started to toll. Excited, the Turks rush to the City Hall to protest against this audacity of the *Giavoors* (infidel dogs). They appear before the Mayor and express to him their indignation. The latter who is a leading figure of the Democratic Party and a good friend of Father Haikazoun, after listening to their tirade, rebukes them and orders them out of his presence.

After this incident, the Mayor paid a visit to Father Haikazoun and told him the whole story, adding the while that the Government not only will defend the individ-

ual's right to his own religion but will prosecute those who molest them.

The Armenians of Caesarea are mostly workers and farmers. The former Khalk government by special decree had forbidden the Armenians to indulge in business. Today that restriction has been lifted and a number of Armenians already have launched a business career. Generally speaking, the Armenians are self-sufficient economically. There is not a single beggar among them. They are industrious and loyal citizens of the land. At the same time they are good Armenians. They feel keenly that they cannot speak the mother tongue, especially the young generation can neither read nor write the Armenian language. It is the wish of Father Haikazoun and the Armenians of Caesarea to establish an Armenian school alongside their church. Father Haikazoun assured me that this dream will be realized by next fall. Although as yet he has received no permission from the ruling party, he is hopeful that his request will not be refused and the young generation will have an opportunity to be educated in the mother language. Father Haikazoun has submitted a full report of the situation to the Patriarchate of Istanbul.

According to the information I was able to obtain, there are Armenians in all the villages of Caesarea who are economically independent, but they have neither churches nor schools. Father Haikazoun visits them several times a year, administering to their spiritual needs. Especially in the region of Talas the number of the Armenians is great. The Americans maintain here a hospital which has attracted a large number of Armenians to that place. According to a census there are more than 2,000 Armenians in Talas and the other villages of Caesarea which raises the total number of Armenians in Caesarea and the environs to more than 4,000. The Armenians of the

villages are likewise Turkish speaking and very illiterate. Armenian parents who send their children to Turkish schools are very few.

For the Armenians of Caesarea and the environs the presence of Father Kaikazoun is a great boon. Through his discreet and circumspect policy he has won the respect of all, Armenian and Turk. Governmental circles and high officials trust him. His appeals and requests are never ignored.

Besides, Father Haikazoun is a patriotic and dutiful shepherd of his flock. He has made the Armenian population of his jurisdiction the object of his paternal care and has faithfully reported their needs to the Patriarchate of Istanbul. The Patriarchate and Caesarean compatriotic societies of abroad should manifest a close interest and should support them materially and morally to realize the dream of Father Haikazoun which we are sure will have a beneficial result.

From Caesarea to Sebastia

I set out by bus from Caesarea to Sebastia, a distance of 375 kilometers to my native town. As I said before, the Turkish Government has paid special heed to the importance of the regularity of transportation and the renovation of the roads. The cities of Anatolia are linked together with a network of asphalt roads, sustaining a bus transit which must be admitted is quite regular. American machinery and equipment take care of all travel and transportation.

It was not difficult for me to book passage by bus from Caesarea to Sebastia, a distance of five hours ride, for the price of five Turkish pounds. On my way I was struck by the vast stretches of space, cultivated in spots, but very sparse in population. One travels many kilometers without encountering a single man on the road. Of late the Turkish Government has rehabilitated the desolate villages in this re-

gion with Turkish families from Rumania and Bulgaria most of whom are busy with farming but who are dissatisfied with their condition. The Government has provided for them homes and land to settle down and become self-supporting. The immigrants must return this investment in installments until the whole debt is paid and they become owners. The subsidy, however, does not suffice for their needs. For this reason the greater part of the Turkish immigrants live in poverty. This accounts for the great discontent which prevails among them.

On the road from Caesarea to Sebastia once was the famous Monastery of the Holy Archangel, surrounded by massive walls. These walls were supported by huge slabs with a diameter of one to two meters. It was a well known shrine. Today one cannot even tell the original place of the Monastery. One wonders where they took these stones, how and why the walls were ruined?

My eagerness and impatience grew with the velocity of the bus as we came closer to Sebastia. We already were climbing up the mountain from whose crest for the first time I would see Sebastia. On the screen of my mind I could see like a motion picture the blissful days of my childhood, my native home, my parents on whose lap I had woven so many of my childish dreams.

Amid those relivings I was wondering in what condition I would find this cradle of Armenian culture, this fatherland of the Varoujians and the Murads which, with its population of more than 40,000 Armenians, and with its vast network of schools and churches, once upon a time occupied a unique position in Armenia Minor.

As my eyes grew moist with those nostalgic recollections and an inner shudder shook my entire being, suddenly from the top of the hill there unfolded before me my beautiful dreamland of Sebastia. How many times I had seen her in my dreams,

clad in her ancient beauty and grandeur! My emotions were multiplied as I came closer to the city. After long years of separation I was seeing my birthplace now reduced to a hazy, misty picture before my moist eyes. The bus came to a halt, the passengers stepped out, while I, lost for the moment, lingered there, vainly trying to move. After five minutes of this frozen rapture, suddenly I was filled with an insatiable thirst to see my fatherland in one glance, every nook and corner, omitting nothing.

Alas, however. There was not a single memento left from the past! The Armenian Sebastia was desolate and in ruins.

Once in the city I had no difficulty in finding my address. I looked around and found one of my compatriots from Tavratz (one of the villages of Sebastia), introduced myself to him and was received by him warmly. It seemed as if I had come down from heaven. Old and young they all surrounded me, embraced me and wanted to hear all about their brothers and sisters of abroad. I told them everything I knew, and they in turn told me everything they knew. They told me all about the Armenians of Sebastia, their needs, their longings, their aspirations. After a brief rest I went to the office of what they call the Security to make my report and to fill the customary red tape. The officers of the Security were courteous and agreeable to me.

These were the days of the Festival called Bairam. All the shops and the offices were closed for the holidays. I was obliged to confine myself at the home of my compatriot for three days. These were exceedingly happy days for me. All the Armenians of Sebastia called on me and gradually the horizon of my acquaintance was greatly enhanced.

By a happy coincidence, Sebastia in those days was enjoying a visit by Sahak

Vardapet Papazian, who had been sent by the Armenian Patriarch to the provinces on a special mission. He had celebrated Mass one Sunday and had baptized six children. His visit had left a profound impression on the Armenians of Sebastia. All of them were hopeful that the Patriarchate would take a closer interest in their condition and would send more emissaries for their spiritual comfort. It is with deep inner pain when I say that our brothers and sisters in Sebastia have been forsaken and forgotten for long years. No one has been interested in their lot. All the appeals sent to the Patriarchate have gone unheeded. Arslanian, the former Patriarchal locum tenens, was too busy with his personal feuds to devote any time to his duties and the spirit of his calling.

Generally speaking Sebastia has shown far greater progress in the field of reconstruction than Caesarea. It has added a number of new roads and new buildings. The old city, however, remains the same.

Three Thousand Armenians In the City of Sebastia

I spent three weeks in Sebastia during which time I gathered considerable information about the Armenians of this region. Unfortunately, no census has been taken so far as to ascertain the number of the Armenians in Major Sebastia, as well as the Anatolian provinces. The figures and the information released by clergymen sent by the Patriarchate of Istanbul to visit the provinces from time to time do not tally with the actual facts. The conjectures in regard to the number of Armenians in Turkey hitherto advanced likewise are wholly erroneous. Stranded throughout Anatolia, whether distant or close, are thousands of Armenians who live a completely isolated life, wholly ignorant of what is going on in the rest of the Armenian world. For 35 years they have waged a superhuman fight to preserve the national

spirit, in many instances they have lost their language and religion, and yet they have lived through by sheer hope and faith. During my travels I met many such people in whom faith for the return of better and happier days is still strong.

In my opinion, and based on certain available evidence, the number of the Armenians in Turkey at present must be placed at 200,000. Now that the Turkish Government has removed the restrictions on travel through the provinces of Anatolia, the taking of a census and a general social, economic, and spiritual survey of these Armenian remnants is a task which no longer should be postponed.

The Number of Armenians In Sebastia

In the City of Sebastia today there are 3,000 Armenians all of whom speak the Armenian language fluently but can neither read nor write in the mother tongue. They have neither churches nor priests. For years they have not seen the face of a priest or a visiting compatriot. They have lived a sort of secluded life, with absolutely no contact with their kinsmen of abroad. If I am not mistaken, during the past 35 years they have received no more than three visits by clergymen to administer to their spiritual needs. To this date there are many children and young people who have not even been baptized.

Before the war the City of Sebastia had a population of 80,000; 40,000 Armenians, and 40,000 Turks, almost half and half. At present the population does not exceed 52,000, part of which are immigrant Turks.

The Armenians of Sebastia are largely artisans and workers. There is a considerable segment of businessmen. Sebastia is vastly different from Caesarea where the Armenians are subject to greater oppression. Our compatriots (of Sebastia) admit that for a long time they have been exempt from discriminative abuse, hatred

and persecution. Of late, by a special decree, they have been restored to their ancestral homes and gardens which had been seized by the Government. They are now the owners of their old estates. The same policy of restoration is being implemented in the neighboring villages and towns. The only exception to this rule are national properties which are still held by the Government. To repeated appeals the Turkish authorities have replied that the time has not arrived yet.

The Churches of Sebastia

Of the former six churches in Sebastia five are in ruins. Last year, as the Armenian newspapers reported, the Armenian cathedral was demolished by explosives because, as it was argued, the walls were cracked and the building might collapse at any time, imperiling human lives. We of course know that this was not true. The real reason was, the Turkish Government had sold the lot to a Turk, and already a new apartment building is being erected on the lot.

The St. Nishan Church of Sebastia is still intact, now converted into a warehouse, while the Aramian School has been converted into a Turkish school. As I said before, the other five churches and schools, the Armenian National Hospital and the Orphanage have been demolished, the space has been sold at auction, and the former edifices are now replaced by new buildings.

The Demand for Churches And Schools

The Armenians of the City of Sebastia live a compact life in their own precinct. They are all splendid Armenians, speak the mother tongue, and are full of national spirit. They try to transmit to their offspring the ancestral traditions and virtues, and to inspire them with the national spirit. Mixed marriages (with the Turks) are almost absent. Boys and girls marry very

early and settle down. They are patriotic, loyal, traditional-minded Armenians. Their only dream is to possess a church and a school of their own. They are not sufficiently fixed to materialize this dream, and yet they have not despaired, and are still hopeful that their compatriots of abroad, especially those in America, will hasten to their aid and will rebuild their ruined churches and schools.

A Call to the Compatriotics

The 3000 surviving Armenians of Sebastia charged me, as a sacred duty, to convey the needs of their plight to their Sebastian compatriots of America and to solicit their immediate aid. I am confident that the Compatriotic Societies of Sebastia which now function in the United States will for the time being lay aside their differences and will with combined effort raise a substantial sum with which to rescue their kinsmen in the old country from certain extinction.

The need is imperative and incapable of procrastination. The Compatriotic Societies of Sebastia must unite at least on this one point.

In Sebastia I met no Armenian beggars. The greater part of our compatriots are economically self-sufficient; they have managed to preserve their self-dignity and respect. Living in Sebastia is more costly than it is presumed. One kilogram of bread costs 40 piasters, sugar 200 piasters, and meat 200 piasters, etc. Three piasters is the equivalent of the American penny. Clothing is incomparably higher.

After a stay of three weeks in the City of Sebastia I decided to visit the neighboring villages, chief among which my birth town of Kovtoon. I set out early in the morning on horseback. I hired my horse the day before. The horse and the donkey are the only means of transportation between the villages in these parts due to the absence of regular highways. Nothing has been

done in this direction during the past 35 years. After trekking one and a half hour I arrived at Kovtoon only to be completely disillusioned and disappointed. That one-time lively and flourishing little village had been reduced to an unrecognizable mass of ruins. All the houses and the institutions had been destroyed. The gardens had withered, and desolation reigned everywhere.

Kurd Ahmed

My first task was to locate the only Armenian inhabitant of the village, my childhood mate Michael who was now called Kurd Ahmed. As I was entering the village I met a Kurd and, halting my horse, I asked him if he could lead me to Kurd Ahmed. The Kurd was gracious to me and led me to the center of the village. There was a small company of Kurds assembled in front of a house and among them, dressed in the Kurdish uniform, was Kurd Ahmed. Forty-two long years had separated the two of us. Michael was completely changed now, his hair turned gray, and now the father of a large family. I watched attentively his eyes and his face. For a few moments I did not reveal my identity. I did not want to see the assembled Kurds become the eye witnesses of a tragic spectacle.

"I am an Armenian from Istanbul," I said to the Kurds who, I could see, were probing me with curious, suspicious eyes.

"You look like a European," one of them finally ventured. "You don't speak the Istanbul Turkish, you are a European."

All this was very confusing to Michael and I could clearly see that he felt ill at ease. Finally, I could not stand it any longer, and turning to him, I asked: "Do you recognize me?"

For a moment our looks met and stood still, as if fascinated, then suddenly, as if driven by an irresistible magnetic power were were in each other's arms, hot tears

drops rolling down our cheeks. We stood embraced for quite a moment, until the Kurds who surrounded us, now embarrassed walked away one by one, leaving the two of us alone. We did not exchange a single word.

After a while I recovered from the trance, told my story to Michael, and learned from him the story of his tragedy.

37 Years Later

By an accident of fate Michael had succeeded in escaping the deportation terrors, and after many terrible sufferings, had married and formed a family. He has four children now. For 37 long years he lived with the Turks and the Kurds without seeing the face of a single Armenian, and thanks to his intellectual equipment, he has won the enviable position of the most educated man in the village, the only one who can write letters, who can administer sound advice, and who is regarded by the peasants as the Village Mukhtar, namely, the town master or the village chief. For years he lived in Kovtoon like a prisoner, without freedom or rights. His first-born son today is 21 years old and is married to an Armenian girl. Despite the prejudicial conditions imposed by the fanaticism of the Turks, Michael has managed to keep the Armenian spirit alive in his children, and has managed to teach them to read and write the Armenian language by using a few old and hidden Armenian textbooks, and by conducting at nights a secret course in Armenian education, without being espied by his suspicious-minded Turkish and Kurdish neighbors. Now that the Turkish Government has removed those restriction on the Christians, our Armenian compatriots are free to learn and to speak the mother tongue.

Michael's greatest source of consolation is the fact that his children have preserved the Armenian spirit; can read and write the Armenian language. In the house, the

father, the mother, and the children use only the Armenian language and regularly pray in Armenian each morning and evening.

Michael has now recovered his paternal home and the lands and spends his time tilling the land. He makes an easy living.

Formerly Kovtoon was strictly an Armenian village with 350 families. Today it has a population of 90 Kurds and Turks, all newcomers from the region of Kars and Erzeroum, and all extremely poor. As I said, Michael is the Agha of the village; besides him no one in the village understands the new (Latinized) Turkish. Thanks to his knowledge of the French language, Michael easily reads and writes the new Turkish, reads the newspapers, and writes the peasants' letters. Each evening the villagers assemble in front of his house to receive the day's news or to dictate their letters.

I was Michael's guest for three days in my native Village of Kovtoon. The very next day of my arrival Michael showed me around both Kovtoon and the neighboring villages.

I spent the saddest moments of my life in Kovtoon, especially when Michael showed me my father's home, now ruined beyond recognition. The whole of Kovtoon presented a sad spectacle. The houses in ruins, the East end, the West end, the South end and the North end were deserted and desolate. Only the ancient tree near our home stood erect, under whose shadow the immigrant Turks lay lazily. And if the tree had withered I would have had a hard time in even locating the place of our old home under whose old roof I had spent my childhood days and enjoyed the tender love of my parents. There was a whole story wrapped up under that roof, my brothers and sisters who with me had grown up there but who, alas, no longer were there.

The walls of our home had been torn down. The stones had been carried away, no one knows where. A little way off stood a few miserable huts. The newcomers had wrecked the houses and with the material had built for themselves new homes, for fear the Armenians might return some day and reclaim their old homes.

My Father's Home

Reverently, and with swelling emotion, I advanced toward our old home which now was in ruins. I bent low and kissed several stones jutting out through the ruins, and gathering a fistful of earth, tenderly wrapped it in my handkerchief. Again and again I kissed that handful of earth as if it was the ashes of my hapless parents whose premature departure from this life put an end to their dreams and ardent longings. This sacred memento of my paternal home I have brought with me and shall keep it until my dying breath, charging my heirs that they shall scatter it on my grave when I am dead.

Throughout this ordeal of sorrow and anguish Michael was a sharer of my emotions. We both were silent, reluctant to separate from each other. By now the shadows were falling, and taking my arm Michael led me to his home. We did not exchange a single word on the way. I spent the night in meditations and dreams.

The Old Cemetery

The next day we resumed our inspection of the ruins. I asked Michael to take me to the old cemetery which I thought was still intact. It took us considerable wandering and roaming by the time we reached the spot. I saw that all the grave stones had been removed and the little chapel where we used to pray had been destroyed. After long searches we finally located the tombstone of our village priest, which bore the inscription of his name and time of death. Vandal hands had effaced the inscription and had overturned the stone.

The Church and the School

Returning to the village we now tried to locate the sites of the old church and the school which were built of solid stone. Only the walls of the church stood erect. The belfry and the altar were wiped out. We could not even locate the site of the old school. The same was true also of the national institutions which once thrived in our Village of Kovtoon.

Formerly each house of our village had its private water well. Of these only one remained now, the well of Murad which supplies the water of the Turkish newcomers. Turkish urchins had filled the other wells with debris. For this reason the village suffered from a shortage of water.

A Handful of Earth

From Murad's Home

Before setting out from the United States, I had vowed to bring with me a handful of earth from the home of Murad which had become a sort of shrine in our village. Acquiescing to my wishes, Michael led me to the place which was located at the skirts of the village, thickly populated by Turkish immigrants. Cautiously we made our way to the house which now likewise lay in ruins. Without hesitation we entered in and sat down on a stray solitary stone. I was too powerless to restrain my tears.

Coming out of the house we stopped in front of a well. It was the biggest well in the village, the last act of Murad.

The immigrant peasants call this well "Murad Pasha." The Kurds and the Turks of the village generally speak very reverently of Murad. His name is on the lips of young and old and they all admit that liar song, "Mother Arax." We both began hero.

I fulfilled my vow. I gathered a handful of earth from Murad's home which I have preserved with great tenderness and which I shall take to the United States with me. Curiously enough, the Turks

have not changed the name of the village. They still call it Kovtoon.

After spending three days in my birth town of Kovtoon I now made a tour of the neighboring villages.

I Visit the Village of Daniel Varoujan

Our perigrinations in the villages of Sebastia lasted four days. After Kovtoon we visited the village of Khorasan which comparatively speaking shared a better fate. Some of the old houses still stood erect. Of the two churches, one is completely ruined and the other is half ruined. At present there are four Armenian families in Khorasan. Before the war it was strictly an Armenian village with 150 families. Today the village has sixty Turkish families, all immigrants transferred from the eastern provinces.

I spent 24 hours in the village. The cemetery is in complete ruins, not one stone left upon another. I conversed for hours with those four families. They all seemed to be satisfied with their lot. Emotionally they are still Armenians, having preserved the national ties. All of them, young or old, speak the Armenian language. They know practically nothing about the outside world. They have not seen the face of an Armenian priest for 35 years. They too expressed their grief that no one has been interested in them. I promised them I would report their plight to the Patriarchate of Istanbul. All four families have preserved the Armenian tradition of warm hospitality.

Doughasar

The next morning we set out for Doughasar which is the oldest Armenian village of Sebastia. Before the deportations there were 400 Armenian families in Doughasar. There was a two story school building which now is in ruins. The village is now occupied by 120 Turkish and Kurdish im-

migrants. The old stone church edifice has completely disappeared. There was only one Armenian family in Doughasar, named the Vosgians. Vosgian, now married and the father of children, unfortunately was not at home. His family could neither read nor write the Armenian language.

Mother Arax

From Doughasar we headed for the Village of Kavra which formerly housed 120 Armenian families. After covering the distance of several kilometers we reached the River Halys (Kizil Irmak). Before the crossing, my companion Michael asked me to take a little rest on the river bank. We dismounted our horses and sat on a boulder. Filled with emotion, Michael now began to sing a strain of the Armenian family song, "Mother Arax." We both began to sob. Old memories carried us to those blessed days of 37 years ago.

The Village of Kavra is now occupied by sixty Turkish immigrants. The old church and the school buildings are no more. Of the old houses only a few stand erect. There are no Armenians in this village.

After Kavra, we visited Khanzar, formerly a village of 100 Armenian families. I found no Armenians here. The old church and the school are no more. Twenty-five Turkish immigrant families now occupy the village.

In the Village of Kochisar we found 10 Armenian families all of whom speak Armenian. They have not seen the face of an Armenian priest for 35 years. No Armenian has visited them during that time. They are completely cut off from the outside world. The Village of Khorkhon has five Armenian families. The Village of Ghavraş has no Armenians at all. They all have been replaced by Turkish immigrants.

Michael and I spent a whole week visit-

ing the villages of Sebastia where we found many Armenian families, all of them fanatical Armenians. Their sole concern was that they might not lose their identity, that they might remain Armenians. They all asked me to be interested in their condition and to inform the Armenians of abroad about their fate. To avoid complete dissimulation, they begged me to see to it that they are provided with churches and schools. They have made repeated appeals to the Patriarchate of Istanbul to stand them a pastor to baptize the children and to wed the young people but to date their appeals have fallen on deaf ears. They are hopeful now that the Patriarchate will take an interest in them.

The Birth-place of Varoujan

My most difficult task was reserved for my return to Sebastia. I had vowed that I would visit the birth place of Daniel Varoujan, the Village of Brgnik, and take with me a handful of earth from the home of the great Armenian poet.

Michael did not accompany me on this trip. I had to visit alone this unknown village which once upon a time was known to all with its 400 Armenian families, its churches and schools. The sun was sinking behind the horizon when I arrived at the village. I made the round of the streets several times. All the inhabitants were Turkish immigrants. How could I find the home of Varoujan? Of whom could I inquire? How? It seemed I was knocking against a stone wall. Could it be that my vow would be unfulfilled?

I almost had given it up. The darkness was fast falling. I came out of the village. There was a water mill on the road. I stepped inside and walked over to the keeper. He was an old bent man past his sixties. At first I spoke to him in Kurdish but he answered me in Turkish. I saw that

he was not a newcomer but one of the old timers to whom I could ask about Varoujan's home.

The keeper of the mill in his turn realized that I was a foreigner and soon opened up. He was the only Armenian in Brgnik. He told me the whole tragic story and entertained me with warm hospitality.

"It is very difficult to approach the home of Varoujan now," he said anxiously. "The precinct is inhabited by Turks. We must wait a few hours and try to get your handful of earth after midnight."

Indeed, this matter of getting the earth was a serious thing. The inhabitants of Brgnik are fanatical Turks who will not even hear the name of Varoujan.

The Handful of Earth

It was already midnight. The miller extinguished the fire, and leaving me behind to guard the house, departed for the village. Half an hour later he returned with a handful of earth carefully tucked away in his handkerchief. At last I had achieved my aim. With a sense of accumulated longing I pressed the earth to my bosom and early in the morning I set out for Sebastia which is an hour's distance by horse back.

The Village of Brgnik had shared the fate of the other villages. It was desolate and in ruins.

My vow and mission were fulfilled now. My conscience was at ease to return to Lebanon and from there to the United States. On my return to Ankara I contacted the local Armenians who hold ceremonies in a French church. They are more fortunate than the Armenians whom I visited in that they have occasional visiting priests. Unfortunately, the Armenians of Ankara know no language except Turkish. I also visited Marash, Djihan, Adana and Tarson and met the scattered Armenians in those cities most of whom speak Turkish.

THE FAILURE

VAUGHAN HEKIMIAN

I had to spend a week at Abu Korkas, a god-forsaken village, where the burning sun turned everything to dust or perspiration. My car had broken down on the way to Luxor, where I intended to spend my month's leave. Abu Korkas, I learned, had one doctor, one lawyer, one chemist, and one of everything; but of bare-footed villagers and urchins in rags, there was no shortage. The only mechanic took charge of my car, and I found that some spare parts had to be brought from Cairo, two hundred miles away.

After engaging some kind of a room for the night, I entered the only grocer's shop towards evening. He was a squatty, little man in his later forties, and gave me a pleasant shock when he addressed me in good English.

The man had an ice-chest too. He wiped his knife to cut me some ham and cheese, and then had some bread brought for me from the nearby baker's. He opened a bottle of excellent Dutch beer, and soon I was seated at a marble-topped table enjoying my supper.

Presently, the grocer came to ask me in a low voice:

"Do you paint?"

I looked at him with surprise. He had a square, rough chin, wide nostrils, a bald head and greyish eyes, most uncommon for an Egyptian. His hairy hands were small and shapely.

"Art and Abu Korkas seem two things wide apart," I remarked.

"Yes," he nodded, "and yet —"

I took him for a sentimental fool, and

drank my beer to his health. The squatty man disappeared and soon returned with a painting in oil.

"What do you think of this?" he asked with pride.

He held it the right distance from me. It was the picture of an ordinary woman, but the artist had given such an expression to her eyes that she seemed almost to be talking.

"Good work that," I said, "did you do it?"

The squatty man's face hardened and he shook his head.

"Alas, no," he sighed. "Last night I nearly committed murder for this portrait, and no one in Egypt would have guessed my motive."

A murder for a pretty face is a common place, but the squatty grocer implied more than that. He had the soul of an artist. He had spent his father's fortune and his last thirty years in the pursuit of painting. He had been five years at the *Ecole des Beaux-Arts* in Paris, which was hard to imagine with Abu Korkas as a background. He had also studied in Belgium, Holland, England and Italy. He had sacrificed his life and fortune for art. Eventually he had returned to his village to open a grocery shop with the last remnants of his inheritance.

Everywhere he had gone, he had been told that he was a failure. He had the burning desire to become a painter, but not the talent. Why did God do such things? He had studied the paintings of masters; had tried to imitate; had tried

to create; he had tried everything. And he had failed in everything.

"What do you call talent?" I asked him, just to see if he could answer me.

"Talent in painting," he answered with irony, "is that something elusive which others can catch, but I cannot."

He would have committed suicide long ago, he said, had it not been for one forlorn hope to which he still clung. An Italian painter had once told him that if he tried hard enough, and lived long enough, he might some day be able to produce something. That solitary glimpse of hope was keeping him alive.

"What happened then last night?" I asked him to bring him to the point.

He opened a fresh bottle of beer and sat down opposite me.

"This turn is on me," he said.

Then a customer walked in, addressed him respectfully as *Ostaz Adly* and bought a box of sardines. When he left, the grocer closed the shop and invited me upstairs to his flat.

He led me up a flight of wooden stairs in the back corner of the shop. The wood creaked and moved under our feet as we climbed and, in one place, I noticed a crack, which luckily was not wide enough to catch my foot.

To my surprise, his house was cleanly kept, and the whole of it had gradually been turned into a studio. There were paintings on every wall and in every conceivable corner. The servant had laid a table on the balcony.

An intense sense of pity for this unfortunate man suddenly gripped me. I had to admire him for his perseverance. I also carried shattered ambitions in my breast. This man had not given up, and it looked as though he never would.

"Four years ago," he said, "here, in this dirty and desolate village, I happened to see a ten year old boy's drawing-book. I

saw promise in his sketches. He was poor and fatherless. I gave him a few lessons, a few brushes, a set of colours and some canvas. I told him he could always come to me and borrow anything he needed from my studio. Last night this boy brought me that portrait. After hanging it on my wall I carefully examined it. I wonder if you or any other mortal can understand my feelings and emotions at that moment? I, a tireless, veteran failure realized that this newly fledged, inexperienced pupil of mine had produced a successful piece of work! If anyone on this earth deserved success that was I. Yet Heaven had blindly lavished its gifts on a boy who had not yet learned to distinguish one shade of colour from another, and had not yet sweated for art. Yet we lived only a few doors from each other. Call me monster, call me what you like, but I went yellow with jealousy. I had endured the injustice of fate for so long, that I saw everything red. Believe me, I turned blue with anger, I caught the boy by the throat to strangle him, and put my name on that canvas. I would have then faced the scaffold with pleasure."

He took another gulp of beer and resumed:

"But another look at the portrait's eyes stopped me. Even though I had no talent, I was in the service of art. I could steal what Heaven had denied me, but steal it only once; for if I strangled that boy, he would not be there to produce any more work of this kind."

"So what did you do?" I asked.

"I first smacked his face," answered the squatty man, "then I embraced him as though he were my son. I taught him how to sign his name on his work. I gave him money to buy a suit and a pair of shoes. I told him that I would reward him for every effort he could show me. I offered to be his father."

He laughed.

"You see," he said, "art being my creed and my mistress, I've so far remained a bachelor."

We had another drink.

"Now that I've unloaded my heart to an understanding person," said the grocer, "I feel better. Many thanks for listening to me."

I tried to find merits in some of his water-colours, but it was no use. He knew exactly what they were worth. I tried to persuade him that he was perhaps a good critic and that he could become a useful teacher. I reminded him that his last customer had called him *Ostaz*, which meant a teacher. He said that he would now make it his life's object to coach the boy.

In the morning, I heard that a robbery had taken place at my hotel. Luckily, the thieves had not thought of visiting my room, for they would have found two hundred pounds in my wallet. I went to the grocer for advice. There were no banks at Abu Korkas, so he suggested that I should keep my money either at the post-office or at the police-station. His own safe was burglar-proof, but he never used it. He preferred to hide his money somewhere in the shop, where no thief would ever dream of looking for it.

"Look here," he said finally, "if you wish you can use my safe. I'll give you a receipt for your money, as well as the key to the safe."

I accepted the offer gratefully.

It was a fine morning, so the grocer closed his shop and, with a satchel under his arm, went out in search of some scenery to paint. His customers were used to waiting for his return, he being the only grocer. He asked me to call at supper-time, when he would see that I had a decent meal.

When I called in the evening, there was commotion outside his shop. The boy

who had painted the portrait, going up to the studio, had slipped and broken his nose. They were carrying him out on a stretcher. Presently, the grocer came out looking very grave.

"Bad luck," he said to me, "it was that crack on the stairs. The poor boy! We can't stop the bleeding. I'm taking him to the doctor's clinic."

That night I supped on biscuits. In the morning, I was told that *Ostaz* Adly was still at the doctor's, and went there to see him. He looked haggard and worried. He had spent a sleepless night. The boy's nose had not stopped bleeding. Twenty-four hours later, I was summoned to the doctor's clinic. I found the squatty man lying on a couch. He looked weak, I thought. A transfusion of blood had been necessary for the boy. The grocer had insisted on giving his blood.

"I have a favor to ask of you," he said, opening his tired eyes and breathing with difficulty. "I might now pass away any minute for I have a weak heart. Here is the key of the shop. Please take my man with you, go there and take your money from the safe." He caught his breath and went on: "On the shelf over the safe, there is a box of sweets with a blue label. You can't miss it. Inside that tin, you'll find an envelope which contains ten hundred-pound notes. I want you to give the envelope to the boy's mother discreetly. My man will take you to her. You see, I've no heirs. According to our Moslem laws, we can't make a will. The government will take everything I possess."

His head suddenly fell on the pillow and he fainted.

I called the doctor who reprimanded me for talking to his patient who was in a very critical state.

I hurried out of the clinic with the servant. So long as Adly was alive, I was within the law in carrying out his

instructions, and I did so with promptitude and discretion. I gave the envelope to the boy's mother as though it contained nothing of importance. She was a shy, gentle-looking woman, still young. Her eyes reminded me of the portrait her son had painted. She knew that the boy was now out of danger. She prayed that the good *Ostaz* Adly too, who had done so much for him, would soon recover.

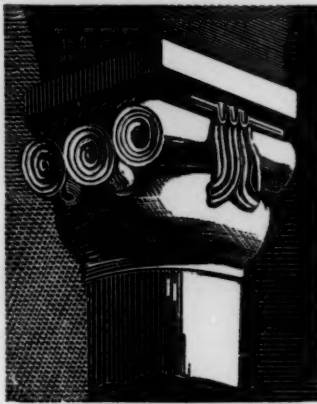
Having nothing better to do, I spent most of my time in the doctor's waiting-room, where there was a comfortable arm-chair and something to read. It was in the afternoon that the doctor had some news for me. The *Ostaz* Adly had at last

pulled through. His complete recovery was now only a question of a few days.

"You'll have something to remember about Abu Korkas when you go home," said the grocer, as I sat at his bedstead.

"I will indeed," I answered. "I'm glad you are better and the boy is saved. He'll carry now his teacher's blood in his veins. I suppose it was all right giving that money to the boy's mother. She looked a decent woman."

"Don't worry about it," laughed the squatty man, "you know, for the boy's sake, for art's sake, and for my own sake, I think I'll have to marry her."



THE MYTHOLOGY OF ARMENIA

PART V

PROF. MARDIROS ANANIKIAN

The Armenian world of spirits and monsters teams with elements both native and foreign. Most of the names are of Persian origin, although we do not know how much of this lore came directly from Iran. For we may safely assert that the majority of these uncanny beings bear a general Indo-European, one might even say, universal character. So any attempt to explain them locally, as dim memories of ancient monsters or of conquered and exterminated races will in the long run prove futile. One marked feature of this vital and ever-living branch of mythology is the world-uniformity of the fundamental elements. Names, places, forms, combinations may come and go, but the beliefs which underlie the varying versions of the stories remain rigidly constant. On this ground mythology and folk-lore join hands.

The chief actors in this lower, but very deeply rooted stratum of religion and mythology are serpents and dragons, good or evil ghosts and fairies, among whom we should include the nymphs of the classical world, the elves and kobolds of the Teutons, the *vilas* of the Slavs, the *jinn* and *devs* of Islam, etc.¹

At this undeveloped stage of comparative folklore it would be rash to posit a com-

mon origin for all these multitudinous beings. Yet they show, in their feats and characteristics, many noteworthy interrelations and similarities all over the world.

Leaving aside the difficult question whether serpent-worship precedes and underlies all other religion and mythology, we have cumulative evidence, both ancient and modern, of a world-wide belief that the serpent stands in the closest relation to the ghost. The genii, the ancestral spirits, usually appear in the form of a serpent. As serpents they reside in and protect their old homes. Both the serpent and the ancestral ghost have an interest in the fecundity of the family and the fertility of the fields. They possess superior wisdom, healing power, and dispose of wealth, etc. They do good to those whom they love, harm to those whom they hate. Then these serpents and dragons frequently appear as the physical manifestation of other spirits than ghosts, and so we have a large class of serpent-fairies in all ages and in many parts of the world, like the serpent—mother of the Scythian race,² and like Melusine, the serpent-wife of Count Raymond of Poitiers (Lusignan). Further, the ghosts, especially the evil ones, have a great affinity with demons. Like demons

¹See art. "Fairy" in *ERE* v. 678 f. See also Kirk, *Secret Commonwealth of Elves*, etc. Its analysis largely support ours which was made independently on the basis of more extensive material.

²Herodotus, iv. 9. The Greek view of the origin of the Scythians was that they were born from the union of Herakles with a woman who was human above the waist and serpent below.

they harrass men with sickness and other disasters. In fact, in the minds of many people, they pass over entirely into the ranks of the demons.

Keeping, then, in mind the fact that, as far back and as far out as our knowledge can reach, the peoples of the world have established sharp distinctions between those various creatures of superstitious imagination, let us run over some of the facts and traits which are described to all or most of them. This will serve as an appropriate introduction to the ancient Armenian material.

They all haunt houses as protectors or persecutors; live in ruins, not because they are ruins, but because they are ancient sites; have a liking for difficult haunts like mountains, caves, ravines, forests, stony places; live and roam freely in bodies of water, such as springs, wells, rivers, lakes, seas; possess subterranean palaces, realms and gardens, and dispose of hidden treasures; although they usually externalize themselves as serpents, they have a marked liking for the human shape, in which they often appear. They exhibit human habits, needs, appetites, passions and organizations. Thus they are born, grow and die (at least by a violent death). They are hungry and thirsty and have a universal weakness for milk; they often steal grain and go hunting. They love and hate, marry and give in marriage. In this, they often prefer the fair sons and daughters of men (especially noble-born ladies), with whom they come to live or whom they carry off to their subterranean abodes. The result of these unions is often—not always—a weird, remarkable, sometimes also very wicked, progeny. They steal human children, leaving changlings in their stead. They usually, though not always, appear about midnight and disappear before the dawn, which is heralded by cockcrow. They cause insanity by entering the human body. Flint, iron, fire, and lightning, and

sometimes also water,³ are very repugnant to them. They hold the key to magical lore, and in all things have a superior knowledge, usually combined with a very strange credulity. They may claim worship and often sacrifices, anima als well as human.

Although these beings may be classed as corporeal and incorporeal, and even one species may, at least in certain countries, have a corporeal as well as incorporeal variety, it is safe to assert that their corporeality itself is usually of a subtle, airy kind and that the psychical aspect of their being is by far the predominating one. This is true even of the serpent and the dragon. Finally, in one way or another, all of these mysterious or monstrous beings have affinities with chthonic powers.

Largely owing to such common traits running through almost the whole of the material, it is difficult to subject the Armenian data to a clean-cut classification.

I. Sharapet of Localities

The Shahapet (Iranian *Khshathrapati*, Zd. *Shoithrapaiti*, lord of the field or of the land) is nothing else than the very widely known serpent-ghost (genius) of places, such as fields, woods, mountains, houses, and especially, graveyards. It appears both as man and as a serpent. In connection with houses, the Armenian Shahapet was probably some ancestral ghost which appeared usually as a serpent. Its character was always good except when angered. According to the Armenian translation of John Chrysostom, even the vinestocks and the olive-trees had Shahapets. In Agathangelos Christ Himself was called the Shahapet of graveyards,⁴ evidently to contradict or correct a strong belief in the ser-

³Goldizer, "Wasser als Dämonenabruhrendes Mittel," in *ARIW*, xiii (1910) 274 f. This may have reference to water in its relation to the birth of fire or to the lightning.

⁴Agathangelos, p. 57. Cf. the cross of the archangel Michael in graveyards of Roman Catholic churches, e.g., French.

pent-keeper of the resting place of the dead. We know that, in Hellenistic countries, gravestones once bore the image of serpents. We have no classical testimony to the Shahapets of homesteads, but modern Armenian folklore, and especially the corrupt forms Shvaz and Shvod, show that the old Shahapet of Armenia was both a keeper of the fields and a keeper of the house. Even today people scare naughty little children with his name. But the identity of these two is established by a household ceremony which is of far-off kinship to the Roman *paternalia*, itself an old festival of the dead or of the ghosts, which was celebrated from February 13 to 21. In this connection Miss Harrison has some remarks "on the reason for the placating of ghosts when the activities of agriculture were about to begin and the powers of the underground world were needed to stimulate fertility."⁵ But the Armenians did not placate them with humble worship and offerings; they rather forced them to go to the fields and take part in the agricultural labors. This ancient ceremony in its present form may be described as follows:⁶ On the last day of February the Armenian peasants, armed with sticks, bags, old clothes, etc., strike the walls of the houses and barns saying: "Out with the Shvod and in with March!" On the previous night a dish of water was placed on the threshold because, as we have seen, water is supposed to help the departure of the spirits, an idea also underlying the use of water by the Slavic peoples in their burial rites. Therefore, as soon as the dish is overturned, they close the doors tightly

and make the sign of the cross. Evidently, this very old and quaint rite aims at driving the household spirits to the fields, and the pouring out of the water is regarded as a sign of their departure. According to the description in the Pshrank, the Shvods, who are loath to part with their winter comforts, have been seen crying and asking: "What have we done to be driven away in this fashion?" Also they take away clean garments with them and return them soon in a soiled condition, no doubt as a sign of their hard labors in the fields.

The house serpent brings good luck to the house, and sometimes also gold. So it must be treated very kindly and respectfully. If it departs in anger, there will be in that house endless trouble and privation. Sometimes they appear in the middle of the night as strangers seeking hospitality and it pays to be kind and considerate to them, as otherwise they may depart in anger, leaving behind them nothing but sorrow and misfortune.

As there are communal hearts, so there are also district serpents. The serpent-guardian of a district, hurting the former but leaving the latter in peace.⁷

As the Armenian ghost differs little from other ghosts in its manner of acting, we shall refer the reader for a fuller description of the minute account given in Abeghian's *Armenischer Volksglaube* (chapters 2 and 6).

II. Dragons

The close kinship of the dragon with the serpent has been recognized. Not only have they usually been thought to be somewhat alike in shape, but that they have also many

⁵This description is based on the account given by Alishan and in Pshrank. Some confusion has arisen in regard to the true nature of this old rite, owing to the fact that Shvod was thought to be *Shubat*, the Syriac name of a month corresponding to February. But it is certain that originally Shvod was the name of a class of serpents.

⁶*Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*, Cambridge, 1903, p. 540.

⁷For a comparative study of serpent-worship and serpent-lore see art. "Serpent" in ERE, xi.

⁸According to Frazer, GB3, part 7, *Balder the Beautiful*, London, 1913, ix. 15, the serpent's stone is identical with the serpent's egg. This, however, is not quite certain. Nor should this egg be confused with that in which a fairy's or dragon's external soul is often hidden (*ibid.*, i., 106f.)

mythical traits in common, such as the dragon's blood, the serpent's or the dragon's stone,⁸ the serpent's or the dragon's egg, both of the latter being talismans of great value with which we meet all over the world and in all times. They are corporeal beings, but they have a certain amount of the ghostly and the demoniac in them. Both can be wicked, but in folklore and mythology they are seldom as thoroughly so as in theology. Of the two, the dragon is the more monstrous and demoniac in character, especially associated in the people's mind⁹ with evil spirits. He could enter the human body and possess it, causing the victim to whistle. But even had redeeming qualities, on account of which his name could be adopted by kings and his emblem could wave over armies. In the popular belief of Iran the dragon cannot have been such a hopeless reprobate as he appears in the Avestan *Azi Dahaka*.

Mount Massis, wrongly called Ararat by the Europeans, was the main home of the Armenian dragon. The volcanic character of this lofty peak, with its earthquakes, its black smoke and lurid flames in time of eruption, may have suggested its association with that dread monster. But the mountain was sacred independently of the dragons, and it was called Azat (i.e., Yazata (?), "venerable.")

The Armenian for dragon is *Vishap*, a word of Persian origin meaning "with poisonous saliva." It was an adjective that once qualified *Azi Dahuka*, but attained an independent existence even in Iran. In the Armenian myths one may plausibly distinguish "the chief dragon" and the dragons, although these would be bound together by family ties; for the dragon breeds and multiplies its kind. The old songs told many a wonderful and mysterious tale

about the dragons and the brood of children of the dragons that lived around Massis. Most of these stories have a close affinity with western fairy tales. Some wicked dragon had carried away a fair prince called *Tigranuhi*, seemingly with her own consent. Her brother, King *Tigranes*, a legendary character, slew the dragon with his sword in a single combat and delivered the abducted maiden.¹⁰

Queen *Sathenik*, the Albanian wife of King *Artaxias*, fair and fickle as she was, had been bewitched into a love affair with a certain *Argavan* who was a chief of the tribe of the dragons. *Argavan* induced *Artaxias* himself to partake of a banquet given in his honor in the "palace of the dragons," where he attempted some treacherous deed against his royal guest. The nature of the plot is not stated, but the King must have escaped with his life for he kept his queen and died a natural death.

The dragon (or the children of the dragons) used to steal children and put in their stead a little evil spirit of their own brood, who was always wicked of character. An outstanding victim of this inveterate habit common to the dragons and *Devs* of Armenia and their European cousins, the fairies¹²—was *Artavasd*, son of the above-mentioned *Artaxias*, the friend of Hannibal in exile and the builder of *Araxata*. History tells us that *Artavasd*, during his short life, was perfectly true to the type of his uncanny ancestry, and when he suddenly disappeared by falling down a precipice

¹⁰For parallels see J. A. MacCulloch, *The Childhood of Fiction: a Study of Folk-Tales and Primitive Thought*, London, 1905, chap. 14, "The Dragon Sacrifice," and E. S. Hartland, *The Legend of Perseus*, London, 1894-96.

¹¹*Chalantantz*, (p. 12) speaking of the modern Armenian folk-tales about the dragons' reciprocated love for highborn maidens and matrons, mentions also the fact that there are many parallels in Slav, Rumanian, and Wallachian folk-tales, and that it is the sons or brothers of these infatuated women who persecute the monster, often against the enamored woman's will.

¹²See art. "Changeling" in *ERE* iii. 358f.

⁹Later magical texts use the word "dragon" in the sense of evil spirit.

of the venerable Massis, it was reported that the spirits of the mountain or the dragons themselves had caught him off and carried him away.

More important than all these tales, Vahagn, the Armenian god of fire (lightning), won the title of "dragon-reaper" by fighting against dragons like Indra of old. Although the details of these encounters have not come down to us, the dragons in them must have been allied to Vrtra, the spirit of the drought.

The epic songs mentioned also Anush, as the wife of the dragon and the mother of the children of the dragon. She lived in the famous ravine in the higher peak of Massis.

The records, as they stand, permit us to conjecture that besides the dragons as such, there was also a race of dragon-men, born of the intermarriage of the dragon with human wives. But we cannot be very certain of this, although there would be nothing strange in it, as the history of human beliefs teams with the "serpent fathers" of remarkable men, and the character of the Iranian Azi Dahak himself easily lends itself to these things. The children of the dragon also, whether mixed beings or not, dwelt around the Massis and were regarded as uncanny people with a strong bent towards, and much skill in, witchcraft.¹³

However it may be about the children of the dragon, it is incontestable that the dragons themselves were a very real terror for the ancient Armenians. We are told that they lived in a wide ravine left by an earthquake on the side of the higher peak of the Massis. According to Moses, Eznik, and Vahram Vardapet,¹⁴ they had houses and palaces on high mountains, in one of which, situated on the Massis, King

Artaxias had enjoyed the dangerous banquet we have mentioned.

These dragons were both corporeal and personal beings with a good supply of keen intelligence and magical power. They boasted a gigantic size and terrible voice (Eghishe). But the people were neither clear nor unanimous about their real shape. They were usually imagined as great serpents and as sea-monsters, and such enormous beasts of the land or sea were called dragons, perhaps figuratively. We find no allusion to their wings, but Eznik says that the Lord pulls the dragon up "through the so-called oxen" in order to save men from his poisonous breath.¹⁵ The dragons appeared in any form they chose, but preferably as men and as serpents, like the jinn of the Arabs. They played antics to obtain their livelihood. They loved to suck the milk of the finest cows.¹⁶ With their beasts of burden or in the guise of mules and camels, they were wont to carry away the best products of the soil. So the keepers of the threshing floor, after the harvest, often shouted, "Hold fast! Hold fast!" (Kall Kall!) probably to induce them to leave the grain by treating them as guarding genii.¹⁷ But they carefully avoided saying "Take! Take!" (Ar! Ar!)

The dragons also went hunting just as did the Kaches with whom we shall presently meet. They were sometimes seen running in pursuit of the game (Vahram Vardapet) and they laid traps or nets in the fields for birds. All these things point to the belief

¹⁴ Quoted by Alishan, p. 194.

¹⁵ This pulling up of the dragon out of a lake by means of oxen also appears in Celtic (Welsh) folk-lore.

¹⁶ In England the Lambton Worm required nine cows' milk daily. Luther, in his *Table-Talk*, describes a diabolical child—a "Kill-crop," which exhausted six nurses. The house-serpent also is often fed on milk, while in other instances the serpent is said to be disinclined to milk.

¹⁷ House-fairies (the Brownie of Scottish folk-lore) thrash as much grain in a night as twenty men do. See Kirk, *Secret Commonwealth*, Introductory by A. Lang, p. 24.

¹³ We know that the Persian Azi Dahaka, a corporeal creature and helper of Ahriman, had a human representative or could personify himself as a man.

that their fashion of living was like that of men in a primitive stage of development, a trait which we find also in western and especially Celtic fairies.

It would seem that the dragons as well as their incorporeal cousins the Kaches claimed and kept under custody those mortals who had originally belonged to their stock. Thus Artavasd was bound and held captive in a cave of the Massis for fear that he might break loose and dominate or destroy the world.¹⁸ Alexander the Great, whose parentage from a serpent or dragon-father was a favorite theme of the eastern story-mongers, was, according to the medieval Armenians, confined by the dragons in a bottle and kept in their mountain palace in Rome. King Erwand also, whose name, according to Alishan, means spirit, was held captive by the dragons in rivers and mists. He must have been a changeling, or rather born of a serpent-father. For he was a worshipper of the Devs and, according to Moses of Chorene, the son of a royal princess from an unknown father. He was proverbially ugly and wicked and possessed an evil eye under the gaze of which rocks crumbled to pieces.¹⁹

Like most peoples of the world, Armenians always associated violent meteorological phenomena with the dragon. This association was strong in their mind. A curious passage in Eghishe (fifth century) compares the wrath of Yezdigerd I to a storm, the dragon is in the very center of the picture. We need not doubt that this dragon was related to the foregoing, although ancient testimony on this subject leaves much to be desired. Eznik's account of the ascension of the dragon "through so-

called oxen" into the sky, is in perfect accord with the medieval Armenian accounts of the "pulling of the dragon." The process was always accompanied by thunder, lightning, and heavy showers. Vanakan Vardapet says: "They assert that the Vishap (the dragon) is being pulled up. The winds blow in a whirlwind. If they do not overcome each other, they whirl round each other and go upward. The fools who see this, imagine it to be the dragon or something else."²⁰ Another medieval author says: "The whirlwind is a wind that goes upward. Wherever there are abysses or crevasses in the earth, the wind has entered the veins of the earth and then having found an opening, rushes up together in a condensed cloud with a great tumult, uprooting the pine trees, snatching away rocks and lifting them noisily to drop them down again. This is what they call pulling up the dragon."²¹

Whether the dragon was merely a personification of the whirlwind, the water spout, and the storm cloud is a hard question, which we are not ready to meet with an affirmative answer, like Abeghian²² who follows in this older school. Such a simple explanation tries to cover too many diverse phenomena at once and forgets the funda-

²⁰For whirlwinds in connection with jinns, fairies, demons, and witches see "Fairy" in *ERE* v. 688a.

²¹Alishan, p. 66. In more recent collections of folklore, God, angels, and even the prophet Elijah, have taken the place of the ancient weather god and his helpers. The usual weapons are iron chains and the lightning. Sometimes it is a cloud-monster that is being driven hard and smitten with suspense in the sky that is trying to break his chains in order to reach and destroy the world. Angels pull him up and fasten his chains. The thunder-roll is the noise of the chains and of the affray in general. According to another and probably older account, the dragon that lives in the sea or on land, must not live beyond a thousand years. For then he would grow out of all proportion and swallow up everything. Therefore, just before he has reached that age, angels hasten to pull him up into the sky. There he is often represented as being consumed by the sun, while his tail drops down on earth to give birth to the other dragons. A magical text of more recent date speaks of the Serpent who remains in

¹⁸There is a contradiction here. In the original Persian story the world-destroyer is the dragon himself, chained to the hero Thraetona.

¹⁹These rocks were exposed in the morning to his eyes in order to neutralize their baleful influence during the day. The evil eye is blue. Before it, mountains, even the whole world may flame up. (Pshrank, p. 180.)

mental fact that the untutored mind of man sees many spirits at work in nature, but rarely, if ever, personifies Nature itself. To him those spirits are very real, numerous, somewhat impersonal and versatile, playing antics now on the earth, now on the skies, and now under the ground. In the case of the dragon causing storms, to the Armenian mind the storm seems to be a secondary concomitant to the lifting up of the dragon which threatens to destroy the earth.²³ Yet, that the original, or at least the most outstanding dragon-fight was one between the thunder or lightning-god and the dragon that withholds the waters is an important point which must not be lost sight of.²⁴

We must not forget to mention the worship that the dragon enjoyed. Eznik says that Stan, making the dragon appear appalling large, constrained men to worship him. This worship was no doubt similar in character to the veneration paid to evil spirits in

hiding for one hundred years, then is taken into the skies, like a dragon, where he acquires twelve heads and four bridles. (Lkam, Arabic). The lightning is often a sword, arrow or fiery whip which the Lord is hurling at the devil, who is fleeing, and who naturally and gradually has taken the place of the ancient dargon, as the Mohammedan Shaytan crowded out the eclipse dragon.

²²Abeghian, p. 78.

²³Here however the meteorological dragon seems to have become fused with the eschatological dragon. Whether these two were originally identical or can be traced to different sources is an important question which need not be discussed here. See Frazer, *GB3* part 7, *Balder the Beautiful*, London, 1913, i, 105 f.

²⁴Abbot in his *Macedonian Folk-lore* (chap. xiv) gives a very interesting account of the dragon beliefs there, which have a close affinity both with the Indian Vṛtra and the Armenian Vishap. The Macedonian dragon is a giant and a monster, terrible, voracious and somewhat stupid, but not altogether detestable. He is invariably driven away by a bride who boldly asserts herself to be "the Lightning's child, the Thunder's grandchild and a hurler of thunderbolts!" Here Indra and Vṛtra are unmistakable.

many lands and perhaps not entirely distinguished from serpent-worship. According to the same writer, at least in Sassanian times even Zrvantists (magians?) indulged in a triennial worship of the devil on the ground that he is evil by will not by nature, that he may do good or even be converted.²⁵ But there was nothing regular or prescribed about this act, which was simply dictated by fear. As the black hen and the black cock²⁶ make their appearance often in general as well as Armenian folk-lore as an acceptable sacrifice to evil spirits, we may reasonably suppose that they had some role in the marks of veneration paid to the dragon in ancient times. But we have also more definite testimony in early martyrological writing (*History of St. Hripsimeans*) about dragon worship. The author, after seeking the cult of fire and water (above quoted) adds: "And two dragons devilish and black, had fixed their dwelling in the cave of the rock, to which young virgins and innocent youths were sacrificed. The devils, gladdened by these sacrifices and altars, by the sacred fire and spring, produced a wonderful sight with flashes, shakings and leapings. And the deep valley (below) was full of venomous snakes and scorpions."

Finally the myth about the dragon's blood was also known to the Armenians. The so-called "treaty" between Constantine and Tiridates, which is an old but spurious document, says that Constantine presented the Armenian ally with a spear which had been dipped in the dragon's blood. King Arshag, son of Valarshag, also had a spear dipped in the blood of "reptiles" with which he could pierce thick stones.²⁷ Such arms were supposed to inflict incurable wounds.

(To be continued)



THE ARMENIANS OF RUMANIA

PART VI

H. J. SIROUNI

CHAPTER IX

Armenians as Merchants

The Armenians of Rumania can be justly proud of their achievements in the field of commerce. Indeed, the business development of Ruman countries owes much to the Armenians. They were the ones who laid the foundation of Rumanian business, especially in Moldavia where the natives generally were tillers of the soil, never used to trading.

If the Armenians claim to be the "founders of seven Moldavian cities," it is because they were the ones who introduced commerce into those cities, established communications and contact with the outside world, and brought prosperity. Thus, to study the history of Armenian merchants means to explore the history of the developments of Moldavia and Bukowina. Such a task would be beyond the limits of the present work. Therefore, we shall give but a brief picture of the role the Armenians played in their sojourn in Rumania as pioneers of business.

Moldavia was a sort of bridge which Armenian caravans emigrating from Crimea to Galitzia crossed. Later, Armenian merchants used the same bridge in their travels between West and East. Thus, in the 14th century and even before, huge numbers of Armenians stopped at Moldavia and gradually settled there, especially because land was very cheap in Moldavia in those days. Besides, the country was situated on the famous trade route from where the Ar-

menians could transport with little cost their eastern and southern goods into Poland, East Germany and elsewhere. At the time the Armenians already were noted as tradesmen. Two of the ancient princes of Moldavia, Alexander Chel Boon (1400-1432) and Schtefanchey Mareh (1457-1504), in their desire to foster business, invited the Armenian merchants of Poland and those Germans who lived there to Moldavia, with promises of a number of exceptional business privileges. And they gladly accepted the invitation and moved to Moldavia and Bukowina.

In Bukowina

The cities to profit most by the advent of the Armenian and German merchants from Poland, as a result of Prince Alexander Chel Boon, October 8, 1407, were Suchowa, Seret and Chernowitz. Suchowa was the principal depot and customs center for merchandise. It was here that the Armenian and German merchants who brought their silkware from Lwow to Moldavia paid their custom dues. The rate was 3 ghroosh (piaster) for every marc (25 ghroosh). After paying their custom dues, the merchants were free to sell their goods in Moldavia or to export them to Bessarabia and Hungary.

All goods reaching Suchowa, whether for export or import, were taxed. The only exemptions were the oxen and sheep, or their hide, if they already had paid a custom tax in the place of their origin. Ano-

ther exemption was the silver imported from Ziberbungen which was largely for the use of the princes (Kaidl-Gesch, Der Bukowina, II S. 97).

The Armenians of Suchowa, thanks to their princely licenses, their familiarity with the East, and their business aptitude, created an enviable position for themselves in a very short time. They launched an extensive trade with the East, lent great impetus to the trade of oxen and hogs, besides engaging in tannery and acting as commercial agents between Bukowina and the surrounding countries.

The first founders of tanneries in Suchowa and Bukowina in general were the Armenians. Here they specialized in the manufacture of red leather for the use of the Hungarian nobility. Besides, they imported large quantities of tobacco to Bukowina and the Austrian provinces at a time when this product was not subject to monopoly. To engage in the trade of live stock the Armenians were obliged to have their private pasturelands and soon they became owners of real estate, purchasing villages, farms and pasturelands at ridiculously low prices. There was a time when one third of the real estate owners of Bukowina were Armenians.

The City of Seret also was a custom center for leather, sheep hides and wool. Although today there is no trace of Armenians here, nevertheless the city was a principal depot center of Armenian merchants. The oldest city of Bukowina and one-time seat of Moldavian princes, Seret early attracted the Armenian merchants.

In Chernowitz custom tax was determined by the coaches. German coaches were taxed 4 groosh each, Armenian coaches 6 groosh each. On the occasion, Chernowitz too was an Armenian mercantile center, thanks to her geographic location. Chernowitz was on the main route between Moldavia and the Austrian cities.

In Moldavia

Besides these few cities of Bukowina, Moldavia became the real center of Armenian trade. According to tradition, the Armenians flourished in "seven cities." If one of these metropolises is Suchova, the other six are in real Moldavia—Potoshan, Hodin, Dorohoy, Cash, Vasliou and Galatz. The chief mercantile element of these cities, according to the Rumanian historians, were the Armenians during the 15th and 16th centuries. It was after this period that the competition began with the Greeks and the Jews. By the end of the 18th century the Armenians had been pushed to a secondary role, while in the next century they were completely extinguished.

In describing the Rumania of the latter half of the 18th century, Father Hoogas Indjidjian (in his "Geography of the Four Parts of the World," Vol. VI, Venice, 1804, page 183) says:

"In Valachia and Moldavia the native merchants do most of the trading among themselves, subject to the Greek Kamarash (Prince Treasurer); their numbers include some native Armenians and Jews. But the foreign trade is in the hands of the foreigners, chiefly Albanians, natives of Janina, Rumanians living in Transylvania and the Jews of Polish Galitzia. Among the Galitzian merchants are many Armenians who have leased vast stretches of pastureland in Moldavia. At various times the princes have supported these Armenians with special grants and privileges. A typical case is Prince Ion (John) Nichola's edict of March 9, 1784. In addition to confirming old grants, this edict adds a number of new provisions. It forbids the natives to increase the rate of the leases, to drive the Armenians to desperation by conniving with neighboring landlords, to try to drive them away, or to use the leased lands for their own cultivation. It gives the Armenians the right to purchase the necessary fodder for their animals. It prescribes

rules to govern the taxes on their live stock. It forbids the natives to confiscate the horses of the Armenians for postillion service, and in case of civil suits it gives the Armenians the right to appeal to the Princely Tribunal over the verdict of the Ispranvik (Governor)."

Next to Suchova, the City of Potoshan has been the chief center of Armenian merchants. As a matter of fact, it was the Armenians who raised the prosperity of this city, winning thereby the respect and the affection of both the princes and the native population. This debt to Armenian merchants is acknowledged by the Rumanian historian, Prof. Yorga, who is a native of Potoshan.

A princely edict (No. 167) makes mention of Armenian Namestniks (Magistrates) along with Rumanian magistrates. Then came the Jews, at first in small numbers, from Istanbul and Spain, and later, in larger numbers, after the occupation of Bukovina. Thereafter the Armenians are relegated to a secondary role as businessmen.

The Armenians of Roman, says Prof. Yorga, had a number of successful wealthy men who owned magnificent mansions, such as Vasile Misir, the most distinguished of them all, and Ruskatul. By special princely grants, issued in 1760, 1799, 1803, 1814 and 1827, the Armenians of Moldavia eventually were recognized as a national breasla (trade unions or guilds) of their own. These special edicts regulated, protected, and governed the civic rights of the Armenians in their occupations.

In the City of Yash, as has been mentioned, the Armenian community began to flourish at the time of Prince Shtephan Chel Mareh (1457-1504) who invited the Armenian and German merchants to revitalize the life of his capital. Thereafter Yash became a central market for the Armenian merchants who carried on a brisk trade in livestock exchange. By 1750 the

community had its own quarters in the city which was called Armenimea.

The same princely capitulations which governed the life of Armenian communities in the other cities of Moldavia also applied to the cities of Pakov, Nemtz and Tergu-Froumoz, according to Prof. Yorga.

Wallachia

The role of the Armenians in Wallachia (Muntania) comparatively is new. While the settlers of Moldavia came from Ani and Crimea, the Wallachian settlement came from Bulgaria and various parts of Turkey centuries after Armenians were established in Moldavia. Consequently, their role in the business life of the province was only secondary. Moreover, this was the period of the dominance of the Greek princes from Phanar who favored the Greek merchants at the expense of the others. Besides, while the Armenians of Moldavia had a wider field of activity which included Poland, Austria and as far as Germany, the Armenian merchants of Bucharest traded with more backward countries such as Bulgaria and Turkey which had practically nothing to export.

In the region of Bucharest the chief occupation of the Armenians until the latter half of the 19th century was the tobacco trade, but when the government monopolized this commodity the Armenians withdrew from the arena with great losses.

In the early stages Armenians also indulged in money exchange more as agents who facilitated the loans of the princes. Such agencies came in handy to the Phanarist Greeks who had no intention of settling down in the land but to get rich in a short while and return. They needed the loans to pay the Veziers for the thrones of Moldavia and Wallachia, and to set the money into circulation for their quick enrichment, since they knew the Veziers would sell the succession to someone else and therefore their reign would be short.

The most noted Armenian money exchangers of this period, according to the record, were one Poghos Sebastian and Mannog Bey Mirzayan from Rusjouk.

In Bessarabia

The Armenians of Kishinev had the monopoly of the "Dessiatin" (One lei for ten pieces), much the same as the Romans and the Armenians of Yash enjoyed in country fairs. Under this monopoly all fairs were open to the Armenians.

In Transylvania

Business and the trades were the chief occupations of the Armenians in Transylvania as elsewhere. According to Father Kovrikian the Transylvania Armenian community of 3,000 included many artisans, but far more merchants who revived the local business and extended it to foreign markets, exchanging the native raw materials for manufactured goods from abroad. It was for this particular aptitude that they were welcomed with open arms by the Hungarian princes.

Prince Michael Abafi of Transylvania issued the following edict pertaining to the Armenians, dated October 26, 1680:

"Michael Abafi, by the grace of God Prince of Transylvania, Lord of the Hungarian section, etc., etc. Having heard the petition of our esteemed subordinates to the end that permission to be given to the Armenian merchants who have settled in the Keteleh Village, Province of Doorda, that in all parts of our realm, in every city and country fair they sell leather goods manufactured by the requirements of their trade, and indulge in the sale of live stock and other commodities, therefore, from the bounty of our pity, and with all earnestness, we command all our subjects, realizing well our pity to said Armenians, to permit them to trade freely in all parts of our realm, and in this matter, never to dare disturb or harm either their person or property."

This protective edict encouraged the Ar-

menians to increased settlement in Transylvania but soon they became the object of envy of the natives who looked upon them as competitors. Even the authorities made it difficult for the Armenians by their restrictions and steady pressure. To relieve this situation, Prince Abafi issued another edict on September 1, 1689, warning his subjects against any trespasses on Armenian rights.

The Armenians of Transylvania enjoyed similar protection in succeeding centuries, to wit: Prince Abafi's later edict of February 7, 1696, and the edicts of Emperors Leopold and Charles VI, Empress Maria Theresa and their successors, all of which have been mentioned in our previous discussion in regard to Armenian civil rights.

The striking thing in the business life of Transylvania Armenians are the commercial or trade unions which they organized as an instinctive measure of self-protection and self-preservation. Examples of this are the Tanners Guild of Kerla in 1700, and the Merchants Union probably founded in 1718.

Professor E. N. Angelescu On Rumanian Armenians

The following testimony from Prof. E. N. Angelescu (*Histoire Economique des Roumains*, Vol. I, Geneva, 1920, pp. 238-244) best describes the role of the Armenians in the economic development of Rumania:

If the Rumanians at the height of their ancient commercial glory extended their activity to distant regions, the borders of the Black Sea, the Straits, and even the Mediterranean, they owe this feat not to the Italians, but to those merchants who knew the East well, namely, the Armenians. They played a big role in the initial stages of Rumanian commerce and the formation of Rumanian cities.

The Armenians have come to our country in great numbers, but those who wielded

the greatest influence on Rumanian commerce were the ones who arrived here during the formation of the cities. They are an ancient people, endowed with national traditions, and preserved, in addition to their numerous faults, with a degree of civilization which was higher than the one which prevailed in Rumanian regions. They also were endowed with a long experience in government and business activity. They come from Southern Caucasus and the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates. Their origin is not Asiatic, but European. They are of Aryan origin, a part of the Thraceans who once occupied the entire east of Europe, the ancestors of those peoples whom we are a part. After the extinction of the Asian Semitic tribes the Thraceans fought against the Scythians and eventually reached the southern part of the Black Sea, occupied Asia Minor, and settled down in those regions in the seventh century B.C. Neither the transitory supremacy of the Persians nor the short-lived Empire of Alexander the Great were able to annihilate the Thracean populations of the Iberians, the Ivors (as the Rumanians called them), nor the Armenians who relied on the protecting plains, even as the Trans-Danubian Thraceans leaned on their plains in their fight against the Greeks and later against the Romans.

During the reign of the Romans the Armenians lived as a subject state, with their own kings who were dependent on the emperors and often were appointed by them. With the advent of the Persians on the political scene Armenia became an apple of contention between the Romans and the Persians until the Roman empire receded and the Persians took over Armenia in the fifth century A.D. Armenia was envied because of her economic importance and because it was the cross road of the caravan routes from India to the Caspian and Black Seas.

With the establishment of the Byzantine

Empire on the ruins of the old Roman Empire a part of Armenia was severed from Persia. Under the Byzantines Armenia prospered more than ever. There came into existence such flourishing cities as Tiflis, Karin (Erzeroum) and Trebizond, with Byzantine monuments and a population which was enriched by commerce. There were Armenian emperors and patriarch is Constantinople, while in Armenia proper, their princes were practically independent.

The beginning of the 11th century marked the advent of the Seljuk Turks who conquered the whole of Asia Minor and united under their rule all the Armenian provinces some of which still were under Persian supremacy while others had been divided between the Arabs and Byzantium. During this period of the new supremacy the Armenians were the sole merchants of the East, the agents of communication and exchange among the motley of peoples who always remained in Asia Minor. When Europe was stirred and the Crusades attempted to put a stop to the Crescent's onward march the Armenians were the sole supporters of the shaky Latin island principalities. Here too, as elsewhere, the Pope dispenses his titles. There comes into existence a king of all Armenians (Rex Omnium Armenorum) much the same as Rumanian Voyvots were made "Princes of Entire Rumania."

In the 14th century the Turkish rule was extended and consolidated in the whole of Asia Minor and began to infiltrate Europe. The field of mercantile activity having thus been cut off, the Armenians now began to migrate into two directions: A. To the Mediterranean, and via the Archipelago to Greece and even farther to the west; and B. The northern shores of the Black Sea, the Italian Crimea, Russia, Poland, and later into Moldavia.

Thus, in two critical periods of their history, the Armenians were compelled

to leave their country to take the road to exile: first in the 11th century, and second, in the latter half of the 14th century. These exiles twice penetrated the Rumanian regions. They came in the 11th century, passed through, and settled down among the Tartars in the north of the Black Sea, borrowed Tartar names and the mores of Islam Mongols. Those who came in the 14th century were exempt from the Mongol influence because they went through and stopped at such cities where Italian merchants were dominant, especially in Kafa. From here they crossed to Cracow and Lemberg (Lwow), the western border of the Kafa routes, and from there to Kamenitz and the whole of Moldavia at the very time when the Principality was taking form. Suchova became the center of Moldavia Armenians where, in the big city, they came into possession of their own city because they had their own organization patterned after the typical organization of Polish cities, with an Armenian Mayor (Soytouz) and their special councillors (Phurkar).

The only thing which preserved their identity was their Christian creed which was different from the Rumanian creed, otherwise their mode of life which is very similar to ours would have hastened their assimilation. Despite this religious difference, even from the start they began to lose ground, adopted Rumanian names, then crossed to Hungary and settled among the Saxons and the Magyars as a Rumanian element, thus lending impetus to Rumanian commerce in Transylvania.

By degrees the Armenians spread in all the cities of Moldavia from north to south,

but in the south they encountered a new Armenian invasion which came from the newly-organized European Turkey.

The Armenians who migrated to the Mediterranean sought haven in the Italian colonies of the Byzantine Empire. When the Turks captured Constantinople and pillaged the business establishments, the Armenians fled to the north and for a while sought refuge in Chetate Alba, the strongest Armenian center in Moldavia, and remained here even after it became a Turkish city under the new name of Akkerman. From here they spread out to other cities to transact their business and to return, but sometimes never returned.

These elements, having come to us through various routes and in considerable numbers, formed an important part of our population, especially in Moldavian cities. From what they have told us about their past we infer that the Armenians possessed an ancient culture and a long experience in commercial enterprises. They were an element which was in a position to establish commercial ties between the two worlds which converged in our country—Eastern Europe and Eastern Asia. Having extensive ties in the Turkish Empire where a large number of their kinsmen still lived, after a time the Armenians became the chief agents of the international commerce of the East. Settling down on the Rumanian soil, in the cities, they materially contributed to the development of Rumanian commerce and to them must go the larger share of the credit of our economic upsurge beginning with the 16th century."

(To be concluded)



ARMENIAN LIFE ABROAD

A digest of recent happenings among the Armenian settlements in diaspora.

United States:

Committee Formed to Push Armenian Language and Cultural Education

The "Hairenik" publications announced early in May that a new joint Armenian American Educational Committee had been formed, with headquarters in Boston, Mass., for the express purpose of encouraging the learning of the Armenian language and culture by young Armenian Americans. The Committee consists of representatives of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation of America, The Armenian Relief Society, the Armenian Youth Federation of America, the Armenian National Apostolic Church Central Trustee Board, and a number of other individuals.

In a lengthy "Call" appearing in both the "Hairenik Daily" and the "Hairenik Weekly," the new Committee announced its formation and described its aims as that of "helping teach the Armenian language and culture to our rising young generation." At the moment the committee Field worker-secretary, Mr. Yeprem Sarkisian, is touring the Atlantic Coast region in a survey-tour with an eye to gathering information on the condition of the Armenian schools already found in the cities, and those places where new schools can be established. Meetings have been held in most major Eastern cities, and Mr. Sarkisian reports large enthusiasm among young and old alike to the Committee effort.

The Committee will advance from its present "planning" cycle to the "administrative" effort of next fall when schools will be opened all over the country under its direct supervision and sponsorship.

Iran:

A Rising Tumult in Iran

The growing attempt by Etchmiadzin, seat of the "prisoner Catholicos" of the Armenian church, to interfere in the activities of the Armenian community of Iran, is raising a tumult of protest among Iranian Armenians.

In a telegram recently sent to the Rev Karapet Manookian, *locum tenens* of the Armenian Prelacy of Iranian Azerbaijan, the captive Catholicos of Etchmiadzin directed that churchman to visit Teheran and, as his plenipotentiary representative, proceed to dissolve all Armenian national bodies there, including the Diocese Council, and the Church Trustee Board, among other such. The *locum tenens* was also ordered to hold new elections and to wire Etchmiadzin immediately the results of the efforts. The Catholicos' wire also revealed that Etchmiadzin was about to send to Iran a number of "prelates" for Iranian Armenians. In addition, the Catholicos bade the *locum tenens* to visit the Iranian government and inform them that the standing Armenian national bodies in Teheran were "illegal" and hence should be dissolved by governmental action.

Greece:

The Question of Citizenship for Greek Armenians Comes Up Again

The principal interest of the Armenian communities of Greece today is the matter of petitioning Greek authorities for the admittance of Armenian residents of the ancient land to Greek citizenship status. Reports from Athens say that all Armenian organizations in Greece are concerning themselves with this matter

This is not a new problem with Armenians in Greece. For 30 years, or since the tumults in Asia Minor led comparatively large numbers of Armenians to seek haven in Greece, the matter has been under one form or another of study. As a matter of fact, a few years after these Armenians took up residence in Greece, the government generously offered them Greek citizenship. That offer was respectfully rejected by the Armenian community ostensibly because it was felt that sooner or later the Armenian community of Greece would return to their home hearths in Armenia or elsewhere in Asia Minor. Now, after more than two decades, there still remain about 10,000 Armenians in Greece. The "return," then, has been executed only in part, and those thousands who are still in Greece now seek Greek citizenship. The Armenian National Central Administration of Greece has called upon all of them to support their effort to win citizenship especially since, as their call states, "the Greek government has indicated sympathy in the matter."

The Middle East:

A Protest Against the Armenian General Benevolent Union

There are strong protest utterances against the Armenian General Benevolent Union among all the Armenian communi-

ties of the Middle East, especially in Lebanon and Syria.

Recently, under the leadership of Miss Leila Karaguesian, a prominent member of the AGBU in America, a campaign for \$300,000 was opened to aid the Armenian community in its educational efforts. Now, with \$235,000 already collected, the AGBU has turned over portions of that fund to the Armenian Catholic and Armenian Protestant communities, but has announced that the majority Armenian Apostolic community must agree to certain requirements before any sum would be passed over to them. What in effect the AGBU proposes is that the money to be given the Apostolic educational bodies must be spent under the direct supervision of a board appointed by the AGBU. It was inevitable that this humiliating proposal would not be accepted by the Apostolic authorities. Both the National Committee and the Antilias Catholicosate have turned it down.

At the same time, certain AGBU circles in the area are busy in protests of their own. They have been speaking out against what they term "unaccountable expenditures" in the AGBU, "nepotistic practices" and the appointment of teachers of "questionable character." As a matter of fact, these charges have been levelled against the AGBU for some time by certain AGBU members who have anonymously printed and distributed a number of flyers outlining their bill of protests against those whom they term "the AGBU gods," who have for some time, with very little check and control, spent large sums of money. To cover up their operations, these AGBU authorities have termed these honest petitions for an accounting of their financial transactions as emanating from "Dashnak

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Yugoslavia:

The Yugoslavia Armenian Community

There has always been a small community of Armenians in Belgrade, Yugoslavia. After the First World War, because of the Yugoslavian policy of discouraging residence in the country of all aliens, the Armenian colony in the capital city just about totalled a mere 100 individuals. There is historical evidence that a small group of Armenians were living in the

city of Novi-sat about the beginning of the 18th century, but these people slowly faded away as a cultural entity through the years. In 1746, an Armenian church was built, and subsequently rebuilt after a fire, in 1872. This church was sponsored first by the Venetian and then the Viennese Mekhitarist congregations.

Following the last war, a number of Armenians arrived in Belgrade. Most of these people, however, have travelled on to Trieste, whence they will emigrate to other lands.



GEVORG MARZPETOUNI

A Historical Novel

By MOURATZAN

Translated from the Armenian

THE STORY THUS FAR

The time is the first quarter of the 10th century A.D., the period when Armenia is in conflict with the Arab invader. Ashot the Iron, the Armenian King, has just liberated his capital of Dovin and is busy clearing the rest of Armenia from the foreigner. His wife, Queen Sahakanoush, together with the families of the nobility, is spending the fall in the security of the Fortress of Garni. Some deep suspicion affecting her prestige as Queen having to do with her husband's fidelity, however, is preying on her mind. She is going through a terrific emotional strain and yet she dares not confide in anyone, with the result that she suffers silently. Old Seda, her foster mother and Governess, not only surmises the Queen's suffering but she knows the real cause of her affliction. The Queen finally breaks down and Seda tells her the whole story. The King has been faithless to the Queen. He has resumed his love affair with his old flame, Princess Aspram, the wife of Tzlik Amram whom he had appointed Governor of Outik. To avenge the honor of his daughter, Prince Sevada has risen against the King who punishes him by blinding him and his son in both eyes. Meanwhile, the King's treachery has provoked another enemy, Tzlik Amram, the husband of Princess Aspram. Prince Sevada and Tzlik Amram join forces against the King. Prince Marzpetouni, a true patriot, is busy trying to reconcile the opposing forces. Trapped by Tzlik Amram, and his Arab auxiliaries unwillingly to fight for him, the King cuts his way through the enemy and makes his escape while his entire army is captured.

CHAPTER XII

Sudden Ending

King Ashot's army which chiefly consisted of the Arab king's cavalry was steadily approaching the Armenian frontier. Its vanguard already had reached the valley where the woods of the Sevordis ended and where the murmuring waters of the Khram, having absorbed the stream of Dsoraket, poured into the serene Kour River.

Here, having encamped on the river bank, they were busy preparing for the imminent attack. For a few days the virgin forests of Dsoraket were being stripped of their ancient adornments. The old cedars and willows, unable to withstand the keen blade of the axe, were bending, then falling down with a resounding crash like dying giants, and were crushing the young green trees and their branches under the weight of their heavy trunks. Yoked oxen from the neighboring villages carried huge beams of timber to the banks of the Kour River. Here, raft-building Arab engineers wove the huge beams with willow strips, and forming massive rafts, launched them into the river.

After they had completed a few tens of these rafts, the engineers tied them together with heavy ropes and slowly pushed them to the opposite bank.

Pretty soon King Ashot arrived with his Arab rearguard. After one day's rest he reviewed his troops. The regiment of the cavalry which consisted of several thousands lined up along the plain which joined the river bank, each regiment led by a princely commander. Here were the Arabs, the Khaldis, the Kours, the Mukrels, the Abazis and the braves of the Valley of Djorokh. They were joined by the Armenian cavalry regiments of the Province of Tayk. Thus, the King was leading a formidable army which the rebels apparently could hardly resist. They all were power-

fully built, mighty and valiant braves, all clad in iron armour and protected by breastplates rivetted with iron side plates, huge and terrifying helmets and iron visors. They were armed with light javelins which they hurled at the enemy from a distance, and with long lances when they fought at close quarters. They had light and heavy shields, and square shaped bucklers. They were armed with long swords and short cutlasses. They also had regiments of archers with broad arches and poisoned arrows.

Having drawn up his troops on his frontier, the King wanted to be sure if his cavalry had the military knowledge commensurate with its external form and formidable aspect, capable of conquering the might of the Oudis and the Sevordis.

The preliminary maneuvers convinced the King that the Arabs were worthy of their fame. He was happy that with these tribal enemies of the Apkhazes, he would be able to give a second sound lesson to Prince Ber who had come to the land of Oudis from Apkhazistan to aid the Armenian rebel princes.

And yet, regardless of all this, and regardless of the timely assistance of the Arab king when he was all alone, and so much in need of a friend, a kind of inner sadness was weighing heavily on his heart. The thought that he was entering his country with the aid of foreign troops to fight against his own kinsmen was torturing his soul. Besides the slaughter of Armenian troops which surely would ensue whether he was victorious or defeated, the very thought of which depressed him sorely, the King was being oppressed also by his shame, the thought that he was alone, that he didn't have with him even a few Armenian princes who, together with his Vanadian bodyguard, might form his royal entourage. He was ashamed of the Arab

princes and even the Arab troops. Nevertheless, he tried hard to appear cheerful, carrying a smile on his face.

The King was also troubled at the delay of Prince Marzpetouni. He wondered about the general situation in the country, if a new insurrection had sprung up, or if his forts had been attacked. Having returned to his tent after the maneuvers, the King was preoccupied with these thoughts when his doorkeeper, one of his loyal Vanadians, suddenly entered in and announced the arrival of Gevorg Marzpetouni. He sprung to his feet from sheer joy, as if a new succor had come to him in this hour of danger.

"Where is he? Tell him to come in," he ordered as he instantly started to pace the floor of his tent restlessly.

Marzpetouni came in and bowed low in salute to the King. The latter, however, embraced him like a loved one whom he had not seen for years.

"No one in his life has waited for you so anxiously, Prince, as I have been waiting for you now," the King said, smiling. "Whence do you come, and how did you arrive here? Are you alone? Have you any troops with you, and what are the rebels doing? What is the situation in the provinces?" He asked the questions like a trip hammer, then, sitting on his divan, he asked the Prince to be seated. "You are tired, of course. Catch your breath, rest a while, then we will talk," he added without removing his questioning glance.

"I have come alone, Majesty," replied Marzpetouni, taking a seat. "I returned my only bodyguard to Quardman from Aghsdev to bring here the Fortkeeper Vahram, together with his loyal Vanadians."

"What did you say?" the King interrupted. "How can Vahram come here without jeopardizing Quardman? Would not his departure leave Sevada free to plot his machinations?"

Marzpetouni then told the King in detail the whole story of his journey, beginning

from the day he had parted from him at the Valley of Quarqaratz to the present. He described the situation in the country exactly as he had seen it, including his conversations with Prince Sevada and Tzlik Amram, the latter's inflexible resolution, the external motives of the rebellion, its expansion, and the rebels' forces and their strategic plans. In short, he told the King all that was important for him to know for the success of his invasion. But he told him nothing in regard to the real inner motives of the rebellion.

The King was listening to the Prince attentively without the slightest trace of displeasure on his face. He was taking it all in as if he were listening to an ordinary story which had no connection with the afflictions of his country. But inwardly he was very uneasy. Although the Prince had told him nothing of the secrets of Sevada and Tzlik Amram, nevertheless he surmised that Marzpetouni knew them but was carefully concealing them from him.

When the Prince was through with his story the King rose to his feet and began to pace the floor silently. He knew the real cause of Amram's rebellion but was not sure how much Marzpetouni knew about it. He was pondering whether he should broach the subject, whether he should open the old wounds and make an appeal to his friendly understanding, or maintain his kingly dignity. Should he do the first, he would have a loyal counsellor who would aid him at this critical moment in deed and advice; should he desist, he would be free of the humiliating anxiety of seeking the help of his vassal. By nature he was proud and invincible. He might be destroyed, but to be blinded? Never! For this reason, after long meditation, he decided to remain firm in his first resolution, namely, to say nothing about these secrets and to face his fate fearlessly.

"So then, tomorrow morning we shall

set out for Aghstev," the King said. "If the rebels don't wish to tire themselves, we shall spare them the pain. My cavalry can fight even when it is tired."

"But we must be prepared against ambush or sudden attack. We must scout the enemy's movements," observed Marzpetouni.

"My scouts have long since been in the rebels' camp. Two of them three days ago reported to me that Amram has laid an ambush for me near the waters of Goghbah, in the bulrushes of Kour. For this reason I took the precaution of crossing my army from his side. Before we reach Aghstev, my scouts will bring me news of the enemy's latest intentions."

"What is my King's plan of battle?" the Prince asked.

"I shall attack them in the open plain. We must avoid meeting the enemy in the mountains at all cost. My cavalry surely will be victorious in the open."

The same day the King called a council of the Arab princes and Marzpetouni and decided to advance to Aghstev the following morning. And that is precisely what they did. The next day, before noon, the royal army crossed the waters of Goghbah and encamped at the base of the adjoining mountain. Here Sepouh Vahram joined the King with his Vanadian followers. He reported that the enemy is encamped at a distance of three hours waiting for the King at three points. One part of the army is entrenched in the plain west of Aghstev to draw the attack of the royal army; the second part is hidden in the bulrushes of Kour; and the third is poised in the woods of the opposite mountain. Once the royal army closes in with the first corps, their plan is to surround the King with the remaining two forces. This information was confirmed by the King's scouts.

There was a second council of war. The King proposed to resort to strategy in order

to draw out the enemy from his hiding place. He would retreat a few leagues to make them think that he wanted to advance on Outik from the opposite direction. This move would force the enemy to pursue him. Then the royal army would turn back and attack them. The sudden attack would confuse the enemy and force them into flight. They all approved of this plan but deemed it better to postpone the retreat by one day to give the cavalry sufficient rest for the about face and the sudden attack. But since the base of the mountain where they were encamped was exposed to sudden attack and was indefensible, therefore they decided to cross the neighboring pass and spend the night in the large but desolate fortress on the mountain slope.

This fort which from antiquity bore the name of "Averak" (Desolate), and which none of the princes had renovated because of its strategic unsuitability, was located on a broad slope of Goghpah Mountain, occupying a vast stretch. Its half-ruined walls and towers, which cast a dismal impression on the observer, still included many homes and entrenchments capable of habitation. But since the enemy sword had ruthlessly destroyed the inhabitants, no one had dared reestablish residence. Behind it rose a series of towering mountains with no pathways, and therefore, they were inaccessible either to the enemy which lay in ambush outside, or to the occupants of the fort who wanted to flee. The front was protected by a deep dry valley, covered with thick bushes, rocks and hollows. The only path leading to the fort was a defile between two lowest mountains, toward which the King, accompanied by his princes, advanced, to lodge his troops for the night.

The Arab princes approved of the place as a safe shelter from the autumn cold. Marzpetouni and Sepouh Vahram, on the

other hand, thought otherwise. They were afraid the enemy might close up the defile and imprison the King's forces. The King agreed with his loyal followers, but wishing to please his foreign allies and thereby to satisfy their egotism, and especially since he did not think the enemy would relinquish his positions and advance against him in the night, supported the Arab princes. The Sepouh and Prince Marzpetouni did not oppose the King, but secretly they were very uneasy.

Toward evening the cavalry steadily entered the defile and began to ascend to the fort, followed by the King and the Arab princes. They posted a company of guards at the entrance of the defile to watch through the night and to announce the minute the enemy approached.

In a short while the desolate fort was converted into a lively place. Fires were started on all sides, while the troops, after they had attended to their horses, started to butcher the sheep which the King had offered. The King himself had given the order to celebrate the pre-battle festival with a hearty meal.

Besides, he had arranged that the princes should dine with him. He was in high spirits and he thought this fact was a good omen of his imminent success.

The hours of the banquet and the enjoyment were over, the fires were extinguished, and beginning with the King to the last soldier they all fell asleep. Only the company of sentries at the defile were awake, and those of the King's guards who took turns to watch over the royal tent. A deep silence surrounded the fort of Averak. Only the occasional neighing of the horses interrupted the silence.

Prince Marzpetouni, however, could not sleep. At first he indeed had a slight nap, but having been awakened by the noise of some fighting horses, he no longer could

go to sleep. He was still tormented by the lurking doubt that the enemy might close the fort in the night. He was afraid of a sudden attack, and this fear was not altogether unfounded. In the open field, true, the enemy could not harm the royal army, but cooped up in this fort surrounded by deep gulleys and tall cliffs, they might easily be besieged and badly mauled.

After a long and restless tossing around the Prince rose up, and throwing his woollen tunic on his shoulders, he stepped out of the low shack where he had been lying. Yeznik, his aide, likewise flew to his feet and followed his master.

"Where are you going, my Master?" Yeznik asked.

"I feel a little restless, Yeznik. I could not sleep. I want to take a look down the valley," the Prince said.

"Permit me to accompany you."

"No, you have been quite tired these past two days. Go to bed and rest. You have plenty to do tomorrow," the Prince said.

"No, my Master, I am no longer tired. Permit me to accompany you."

The Prince could not resist his servant's persistence and the two departed from the shack. It was a cold autumn night but the sky was clear and starry. The moon was serenely gliding over the celestial arch illuminating with its silvery rays the surrounding mountains, the cliffs, the precipices, and the half-ruined buildings of the sprawling fort which at the moment presented in their abysmal silence a solemn and awe-inspiring spectacle. Inside and outside the fort the troops lay in companies, wrapped up in their goatskin coats and their heads resting on knapsacks or saddles. The horses likewise, in groups or alone, were enjoying their fodder voraciously, while the sentries, swinging their long lances, paced to and fro in front of the ruins or the slopes of the defile

where the road led to the pass. Through the distant ruins could be heard the hooting of an owl which, in that peaceful hour, grated upon the ears of those who were awake.

The Prince and Yeznik crept through the sleeping company with light steps. No one woke up. Some of the guards challenged from afar and having received the watchword again fell silent. Finally they reached the base of the mountain.

"Shall we go very far from the camp, my Master?" Yeznik asked.

"No, we shall go as far as the mouth of the defile then we shall return," the Prince replied. "I want to see if our guards are watching the defile or have gone to sleep."

Marzpetouni had hardly spoken the words when, suddenly, they heard sounds from the direction of the defile.

"What's this? It seems the guards are fighting," the Prince stopped in his tracks.

"Riders are coming toward us, my Master. Who can they be?" Yeznik asked, suspecting something.

And, of a truth, a company of riders raced into the hollow at that moment.

"It is our sentries," the Prince said, shaking with a sudden fear.

"Then the enemy is approaching," the aide surmized.

The Prince did not reply, but advancing towards the riders, he asked in a loud voice, "Guards, where are you going?"

"The enemy is here, right before us, my Master," the captain of the guards said, stopping before the Prince.

"What? The enemy?" the Prince exclaimed, as if reluctant to believe his ears.

"Yes, the enemy," the latter repeated, "their companies have closed up the entrance of the defile."

It seemed the Prince was stricken by lightning. His suspicions had come true.

"How did they arrive here? Why didn't

you notice them in time to notify us?" the Prince asked, after a pause.

"No, my Lord, we didn't see them in the open plain."

"How come you did not see them? Did they drop from a clear sky?"

"It was as if they dropped from a clear sky. They rushed from the slopes of the mountain which closes the mouth of the pass."

The Prince stood there bewildered.

"Let's hurry and wake up the soldiers, my Master," Yeznik ventured softly.

"It's needless. The rebels will not go farther. They are not so careless as we," Marzpetouni observed and with steady steps returned to the fort.

And indeed no one pursued the fleeing sentries. Amram's troops had securely closed up the defile. He could sit easy now and wait for his foe's surrender.

Prince Gevorg reached the King's tent and stopped there. He did not dare to enter in and wake him up. "Sevada's prediction has been fulfilled," he mused, "God has punished the guilty. In vain we tried to escape from His anger. That anger has caught up with us and has betrayed us to the enemy."

But the clatter of the fleeing sentries had awakened many of the troops. In a moment the news of the enemy's arrival ran through the camp like a lightning, arousing both the troops and the commanders. The din and the tumult awakened the King. Just then Prince Gevorg entered in and told the King the sad news.

"To arms! To arms!" shouted the King, springing to his feet. In a flash he donned his helmet and sword and was ready to fly out, but the Prince held him back. There is no need of hurrying, my Lord King. The enemy is not advancing. He is firmly entrenched at the entrance of the pass."

"How can you speak like that, Prince Marzpetouni? Are you still asleep?" the

King exclaimed, seeing the composure of his loyal servant.

"I have not slept. I could not sleep. I had expected this disaster any moment."

"What disaster are you talking about? This is not the first time we are being attacked."

"No, Lord King. But our present position?"

"Nonsense," interrupted the King, loath to be contradicted on the position he had chosen. "Go tell the commander to make ready for instant attack."

Without a word the Prince left the tent and communicated the King's command to the chiefs. In a few moments the soldiers were ready. And yet, how could the cavalry attack on these slopes and deep hollows? The cavalry needed an open plain, a broad front with plenty of leeway, whereas it now confronted a deep gulch and a closed pass.

The princes and the captains of the troops came to take counsel with the King.

"We must attack at once, we must give the enemy no time for rest," the King argued. "If we wait for tomorrow, the rebels will occupy the heights and will surround us on both sides. It will be more difficult to fight then."

"We are not familiar with our present position, nor our surroundings," the Arab princes argued, "therefore, we cannot meet them in the night. Let us wait until morning, then we will act as you see fit. Just now we can only explore our surroundings so that we can fight when the light dawns."

Finally it was decided that Sepouh Vahram and an Arab prince should proceed at once with their aides to reconnoiter the surrounding positions. If they should discover a path to the open plain, the troops would come out and this way the danger would be minimized. If they should discover no path, they would fight

to prevent a seige. Prince Gevorg and Sepouh Vahram supported this view, and finally the King was forced to assent in order to prevent needless slaughter.

Early in the morning Vahram and the Arab prince returned with their aides and told the King the result of their exploration. "We are shut in from all sides," said Sepouh Vahram, "the opposite mountain has not a single passage. If we should cut a path through the woods, again it would be of no use to the cavalry because the base of the mountain on the other side is covered with natural obstacles. These hills behind us likewise hinder our path because they slowly rise to join the mountains. Our only exit is through the defile which is now held by the enemy. Our only course is to let the archers ascend the heights and put the enemy to flight with their arrows. In the general confusion we might be able to release our cavalry company out into the open field."

"But to accomplish that we need days," interrupted the Arab prince who had accompanied the Sepouh.

"We can busy the archers for a whole week," the King observed. "We have a good supply of arrows."

"Yes, my Lord, we have a good supply of arrows but we have no water," repeated the Prince.

"How come we have no water?"

"It's true," confirmed the Sepouh. "In these parts there is neither a stream nor spring. The only stream which we used yesterday is the one at the mouth of the pass, but the enemy already has deflected its course."

"There must be some other source of water in these mountains," the King repeated.

"We have searched everywhere but we couldn't even find rain water," the Arab prince replied.

"Then we are lost," exclaimed his colleagues in unison.

The King was completely bewildered.

"What shall we do, my Lord?" asked a young Arab prince.

"We shall do what we must do," the King replied with sudden composure.

"And what is the thing we must do?" the young prince persisted.

"In such a case the Armenians fight. I don't know what the Arabs do," the King retorted acidly, as if wishing to reproach the young prince.

"No nation's cavalry will fight on the slopes of a mountain or in a gulch, O King," replied the leader of the Arabs, wishing to defend the honor of his kinsmen.

The King made no reply, but turning to Prince Marzpetouni and Sepouh Vahram, he commanded:

"Go this minute, assemble the riders of the Vanandians and the Tays, and tell them the King will lead them. In a few moments we shall attack the rebels."

The Prince and the Sepouh departed, but the Arab princes remained standing. For a few moments the King silently paced the floor, then turning to their leader, he said, "When King Constantine dismissed me, he told me he was sending with me the choicest and the bravest of the Arab princes, who command the bravest and the most fearless troops. I do not demand that you should help me at this grave moment. Life, after all, is a precious gift, why should you jeopardize it? But I do demand that, when you return to your country, you shall tell your brave King that his princes could not face the Armenian rebels. That much will be enough for King Constantine to measure the bravery of his princes."

Saying it, the King went out of his tent. The Arab princes were deeply hurt

by the King's words. Bewildered, they looked at one another, unable to utter a single complaint.

"Shall we stand this insult?" finally one of the young princes asked of his leader.

"He who cannot stand it should take his company and follow the Armenian King," the leader spoke deliberately.

And yet, no one answered, because no one wanted to become a party of such a foolhardy attempt.

When King Ashot stepped out of his tent, he saw that the Vanandian and Tays braves were all ready, headed by Prince Marzpetouni and Sepouh Vahram. The King instantly mounted his fleet steed, and leading the troops shouted in a loud voice:

"My braves, which of you is willing to fight and die with his King?"

"All of us," the braves shouted in unison, echoing the distant mountains.

"Very well then. Forward!" the King shouted, and unsheathing his sword he headed straight for the enemy. The cavalry followed him. A company of the rebels already had advanced as far as the mouth of the gully and from a distance was watching the advance of the royal army. Seeing the advance of the cavalry, it hastily retreated to the security of the defile. The King caught up with them in the middle of the pass. By this sudden attack he intended to put the company to flight, and thus to create confusion among the force which closed up the pass. The Vanandians and the Tays fought fiercely. Their horses trampled over the helpless infantry who fought with short swords and worked havoc among them with their long lances. The encounter lasted scarcely half an hour because the attack of the royal troops was so sudden, and the clash was so violent that the rebel company could not stand the shock, and fled in disorder with the victorious royalists in jubilant pursuit.

For a moment it seemed fate had smiled on the King. Having reached the mouth of the defile, the fleeing rebels scattered on the slopes of the mountain. The King's cavalry now fell upon new companies who already were confused by the shouts of both the fleeing rebels and the victors, and started to massacre them mercilessly. The encounter did not last long and these companies were put to flight, clearing the defile before the King's troops. But presently there appeared on the scene Sepouh Tzlik Amram and Prince David of Quardman, mounted on their mighty stallions, the first leading the ferocious Sevordis, and the second the mighty Quardmans, who instantly changed the entire complexion of the battle. Sepouh Amram cheered his braves and with drawn swords swooped upon the King's troops. His voice rang in the defile like the roar of the mighty spring torrent, heightened by the deafening cries of his myriad followers. The King and Prince Marzpetouni likewise encouraged their braves and the warriors on both sides closed in with renewed furore.

Neither side would yield. The royalists were trying hard to drive the rebels from the defile while the latter fought hard to repel them back into the valley. The King's horsemen were at a disadvantage. They could not attack, and in order to fight the infantry which swarmed all over them, they were obliged to discard their long lances and fight with their swords. And yet they fearlessly pressed the enemy. And although the numbers of the latter steadily increased while theirs decreased, nevertheless the royalists withstood the mighty torrent and fought with the ferocity of despair.

At this moment there was a terrible shower of arrows coming from the mountain slope to the right. This was the work of the Aphkazis. Prince Ber, seeing the royalists' stubborn resistance and the havoc which they were working among his allies,

had withdrawn his archers to the slope from which position he assailed the royalists. And since this new attack came from the right, their shields were useless (because they used the left hand to hold the shield while they used the right for the sword), and thus they were caught between two fires. Seeing the desperate position of his troops, as well as the fact that he was hopelessly outnumbered, deeming further resistance useless, the King called Prince Marzpetouni and commanded him to sound the retreat.

This command struck the Prince like the shock of lightning. The man who always had tried to prevent a fratricidal war would no longer listen to the call of retreat; the din of the battle and the reek of blood had intoxicated his soul. At that moment it did not occur to him that he was fighting against his brothers, but that he was punishing the rebels, the enemies of the throne and the fatherland. Therefore, no matter how small his company was, and how strong the enemy, nevertheless his invincible soul would not succumb to superiority of numbers. He was defending his King, the potentate of the Armenian throne, and this thought was enough to steel his heart and to convert him into a lion. But when the King commanded the retreat his body shuddered in revolt, his mighty arm staggered, and the bloody sword hung limply in his hand like a useless tool. He howled a moan which was more like a dull roar, and following the riders, he sounded the alarm to retreat.

The royal army started to retreat slowly, deliberately, never in flight. When they reached the valley they saw that the Arabs were descending the fort to hasten to their aid. Having witnessed the King's initial success, the allied princes finally had decided to fulfill their duty. But when they saw the King's retreat they stopped on the slope.

The rebels, seeing the appearance of the Arabs, withdrew from the fight, and the royal regiment, now substantially diminished, returned to the camp without any difficulty.

"We were coming to help you, Lord King," the leader of the Arabs said when the King reached the slope.

"You shouldn't have bothered, Prince," the King replied bitterly. "The defile is no place for the Arab braves to fight."

"But we were ready to fulfill our duty. We delayed in order to line up our regiments."

"And your delay was not entirely useless. You saved the honor of your braves by not sharing the indignity of our shameful defeat." Saying it, the King left them, with a contemptuous smile on his lips. The leader of the Arabs looked after him wildly, and seething with anger returned to his tent.

The spirit of division which generally follows defeat already had resolved the unity between the King and his allies. The Arab princes who at first, in obedience to King Constantine's command, had joyfully come to the aid of the King, and they had done this not only in order to cement the friendship of the two nations, but in the hope of a shining victory and a rich loot, now discomfited and heart-broken, had rallied to the tent of their leader and were thinking of separation and flight. These strangers had come for their own personal interest only, the hope of getting rich quickly. Instead, there awaited them inevitable slaughter and death by starvation. Besides, there were murmurs among their troops. Although they had sufficient food supplies to last a week's siege, what was worst of all, they had no water. Both themselves and their horses suffered from lack of water. No soldier could stand such a heavy affliction.

For this reason, they came in companies

and crowded in front of the prince's quarters and demanded that they either be disarmed and be allowed to leave the army, or they show them a way of obtaining water.

After long consultations, the chief of the Arab princes decided to appeal to the King to show them a way out. Together with his Arab colleagues he entered the King's tent just when the latter was holding a conference with his two loyal captains, Prince Marzpetouni and Sepouh Vahram.

"The troops are complaining, Lord King," the chief of the Arab princes said. "Their unrest is spreading and soon may become menacing. What shall we do? What is your command?"

"It is the Arab soldiers who are doing the complaining. Is it not so?" the King asked.

"Yes, Lord King."

"What do they want?"

"The commonest, the most natural of demands."

"Namely?"

"They want water, Lord King."

"Or else?"

"Or else they surrender their arms to the enemy and be free of this prison."

The King transfixed the chief for a short moment, then said, "The troops' demand is both unnatural and unjust."

"How so, Lord King? Have men no right to drink water?" the chief of the Arabs asked with a smile mingled with wonder and sarcasm.

"No!" The King replied in a stern tone. The princes stared at the King.

"My answer perhaps surprises you," said the King, "but I said nothing to be surprised at. He who demands water in a waterless place, makes an unnatural demand; he who seeks freedom at the cost of surrendering his arms submits to the most humiliating of all acts."

"What shall we do then? Die? Is it not

better to be disgraced rather than to die?"

"No, it is better to die, rather than to be disgraced," the King replied deliberately.

There was a moment's silence. The King's answer impressed the Arab chief who hung his head low and began to ponder. But one of the princes, a young man, stepped forward and said: "Lord King, a soldier is disgraced not only when he fails in valor, but also when he fails in sincerity. Therefore, I beseech you, do not be angry with me when I venture candidly to admit a certain truth to hide which, in my opinion, is equivalent to treason."

"Speak," the King commanded.

"We have come to help you by command of our king. We would have fulfilled that duty had we had the chance. But fate, or perchance our lack of foresight has cooped us up in a small village to escape from which we have no chance. Thirst is torturing our soldiers, the enemy's sword is decimating them. We cannot fight because we have no range for battle. We cannot get out because there is no way. We naturally do not want to die. There is nothing left for us except to surrender our arms and save our lives for our families."

"To save at the cost of dishonor?" the King shouted.

"There is no dishonor in it. We are guests in your land and we would have fought for your majesty. Therefore, neither the glory of victory, nor the loss of defeat belongs to us."

"So?"

"So you will show us a way to enable us to fulfill our duty, or permit us to surrender our arms to the enemy."

The King stared at the youth, then he surveyed the princes. They all were silent, waiting for his answer.

"You have come here on the command of your King, under the Arab banner," the King began in a soft steady voice. "You have come to help the Armenian

King according to the treaty between your king and my late father. Therefore, by doing your duty, you will prove that you know how to keep your self-respect; on the other hand, if you should escape from this place, you will dishonor your king and will stain the Arab banner. This is my answer to your proposition. As to the other matter, whether or not I, the king of the Armenians, can agree with you to surrender my arms to the enemy, my answer is, that I cannot do. King Ashot has met with many such mishaps, many times has been surrounded by enemies and traitors, but not for a moment has he ever thought of surrendering to the enemy. I may fall sword in hand, but to submit to the indignity of surrendering to the enemy, never. In case of a siege you think only of saving your skin, while I think of saving my honor. As you see, you and I serve entirely different purposes. Therefore, we shall not obstruct each other. When a man is determined to fall it is impossible to hold him erect. You are free to do what you please at this moment. The Armenian King still has a few braves left with whom he can die. But when you reach your land safe and sound, be sure to tell your wives and children that you bought your lives at the cost of your arms. Such a novelty surely will delight the Arab women."

"Lord King, you are insulting your allies," observed the chief of the princes.

"You are thinking of surrender; you cannot be my allies."

"Then we are not your allies," the chief replied angrily, and turning to his colleagues he said, "Princes, the desperate soldier is waiting for us. Let us go and fulfill our last duty." Saying it, he saluted the King coldly and led the way. His princes followed him.

The King heeded not either the prince's last words nor the princes' salute. Staring

at a corner of the tent, he was deep in thought. When he sensed the tense silence in the tent, he turned to his own princes and said, "Yes, the Arabs shall save their skin. He who submits to dishonor achieves a benefit which he deems superior to honor. What do you think of the Armenian soldier?"

"The Armenian soldier is ready to fight to his last breath," Sepouh Vahram answered. "All he needs is a leader."

"We shall lead him, but what profit from fighting?" observed Prince Marzpetouni. "Our numbers are so few that the enemy will annihilate them in a few moments."

"You say they are ready to fight to the last breath?" the King asked.

"Yes, my Lord," answered Sepouh Vahram.

"Then we must profit from that readiness. Tonight we shall fall on the enemy with all the force we possess."

"With the aim of combatting the enemy?" Sepouh asked surprised.

"No, with the aim of piercing through."

The Prince's face brightened. This means of salvation, indeed, was the easiest and the most honorable. Marzpetouni likewise was agreeable to the idea. However, they had to make ready secretly, lest the Arabs obstructed their design.

At the King's command, the princes went out to give the necessary orders to their troops. Toward evening, a few Arab companies descended the walls of the fort and reached the valley. Prince Gevorg noticed this movement, and concluded that the Arabs had come to an agreement with the enemy with a view of surrendering their arms. He was still amid these thoughts when Yeznik, his aide, came in and whispered to him, "My Master, the Arabs are cooking up treason. We must save the King's life."

"What sort of plot, Yeznik?" the Prince asked alarmed.

"They have agreed with Tzlik Amram to surrender the King. In return, Amram has agreed to free the Arabs without disarming."

"How did you learn this?"

"Every soldier who reached the valley knows it. The princes have ordered them to guard the pass closely; should the King escape they will pay with their lives."

Yeznik's news worried the King's trusted friend. He saw that all hope of escape was lost, and once again he remembered Seveda's words: "This time God will punish the guilty."

Troubled with this apprehension, Marzpetouni joined the Sepouh and the two entered the King's tent to bring him the sad news. But great was their surprise when the King laughed at them after hearing the news.

"That scoundrel is thirsty for my blood," he said calmly. "I have known Tzlik Amram long since. He has no ambition, therefore, it was not ambition that led him to rebel against his king. He wants my person. The riddle is solved now."

"Your person? My Lord, why should Amram want your person?" Sepouh asked surprised.

The King apparently was embarrassed. He sensed the inadvertance of his words and tried to avoid explanations.

"In this manner our little force, too, will be saved. When I am gone the enemy will leave alone both the Arabs and our remaining force," said the King enigmatically, without answering Vahram's question. Prince Gevorg was puzzled and asked the King to explain his words.

"Tonight I shall leave this place," the King said.

"You? Alone?" the Prince asked.

"Yes."

"By what way?"

"Between the Arab guards and the enemy camp."

Both the Sepouh and the Prince stared at the king in wonderment.

"I will make the princes of the Arabs and the Sevordis understand that seizing Ashot the Iron and delivering him to Tzlik Amram is something beyond their power"

The Prince was delighted at these words while the face of the Sepouh became lit with a broad smile of satisfaction.

"Up to now I have been concerned solely with the safety of my loyal followers," the King continued, "but now I see it was my person which endangered their safety. Therefore, I shall go away from this place and remove the danger which hangs over you."

"You go away to save your precious life because the land is waiting for its king. As to us, even if we should die, it will not be a great loss to the country," the Sepouh said with feeling.

"All the same, it will be a loss to the Armenian king," the King added.

It was evening. Only Prince Marzpetouni and Sepouh Vahram knew of the King's intention. According to the King's command, they summoned two of the King's bravest and most trusted young guards and ordered them to be ready to follow the King. Early in the night the King emerged from his tent, armed from head to foot in steel. The two guards, likewise armed in heavy armour, brought the King's mighty stallion. With the agility of a twenty year old youth, the King mounted his horse. The two guards likewise mounted their horses.

"We must go through them like a tornado. Neither man nor demon shall be able to resist us. We shall cut our way through their regiments, their battalions, we shall trample them over. In a quarter of an hour we shall be on the plain of Kour," the King commanded as he drew his sword. "On then. Forward, my braves!" And spurring his horse, the King was off.

The guards raced close to him. In a few moments the three riders disappeared in the dark.

By the King's luck the sky was overcast and the moon was hidden. No one could spy them from the distance.

When they reached the depression the clatter of the hoofbeats awakened the Arab guards who instantly blocked the King's path, but the King's stallion and the blows of his mighty sword cut through them, while the shouts of the two guards and the shock of their lances scattered the company. Like the wind, sweeping through the rest of the companies which obstructed their path, they reached the mouth of the defile. Having learned that it was the King who had cut through their ranks, the Arabs instantly pursued the King with wild cries. The King and the two guards added to the shouts as they reached the rebel banks. The latter, surprised by the shouts, thought the Arabs were attacking them, and in the general confusion began to trample over each other in their haste to reach the camp.

The King took full advantage of the confusion. Together with his two guards, hacking right and left like an irresistible torrent, he cut his way through the entire length of the defile, and having come out into the open plain, even in front of Amram's army, racing like lightning, disappeared in the darkness of the plain.

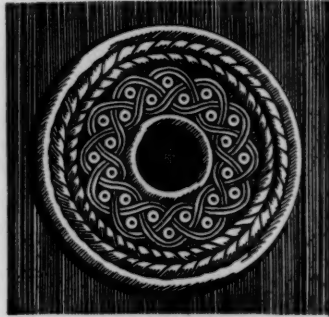
A few hours later the rebels became aware of the King's flight. The princes of the Sevordis and the Arabs were keenly chagrined, while Tzlik Amram and Prince Ber of Aphaz could hardly suppress their fury.

The next morning the rebel army occupied the fort. They disarmed the Arabs and set them free with only their horses. But they did not touch the remaining few

Armenian horsemen because Prince Marzpetouni and Sepouh Vahram begged Amram not to be severe to his brothers. Although furious at the King, Amram never-

theless respected the princes' request and parted with them without rancor.

(To be continued)



BOOKS AND AUTHORS

H. Kurdian, Reviewing Editor

THE DIVAN OF PHRIK (*Complete Writings by Phrik*) by Archbishop Tirayre. Large 80 paper bound, pp. 756, illustrated. New York, 1952. Price \$10.00.

This is a unique edition, masterfully done and scholarly, exquisite in print and form. The Divan of Phrik which in Armenian means the complete writings of Phrik the great poet, could be found in its original form many decades ago only in such bona fide institutions as The Russian Academy of Sciences in Petrograd. Archbishop Tirayre, the learned scholar, we are happy to say, has finally enriched this original with a substantial amount of new material, corrected evaluation, and a most comprehensive and critical introduction, all the result of arduous, patient and painstaking research of long years. The imposing volume was published by the Melkonian Fund under the auspices of the Armenian General Benevolent Union.

In his Preface Archbishop Tirayre informs us that parts of this work in its original form was published in the "dark days" of 1918 in the official monthly organ of the Armenian Apostolic Church at Etchmiadzin, now a part of the USSR. The present volume is a study of the "life, the times, and the person" of the great Armenian poet Phrik of the 13th century A.D. These critical studies occupy a considerable portion of the book, 238 pages to be precise. Then follows a careful and minute collation of all versions of Phrik's poems which has come down to us through the centuries, assembled from all ancient manuscripts and collections from all lands which the Archbishop has known.

Pages 561 to 621 offer a wealth of information about the Mongols. The book ends with a voluminous lexicon, an index, and a table of errata. Thus, another great work is added to the imposing collection on Armenia, all thanks to the saintly patience, industry, and scholarly ability of Archbishop Tirayre and to his sponsors, the Armenian General Benevolent Union.

All we know about the great Armenian poet Phrik is what we have learned from his poems and the sparse remarks interspersed in their

titles, commonly attributed to the copyists of the manuscripts. This very meager information, unfortunately, gives us only a sketchy idea of his biography. From these titular remarks it can easily be inferred that Phrik's life extended from the middle of the 13th century to its end. In the opinion of Archbishop Tirayre Phrik was born about 1210-1220 A.D. and died at the age of 75-80. Phrik's father was one Takvosh and this is all we know for a certainty about Phrik. So far as we know 51 poems have come down to us from Phrik's pen. It is highly desirable that these poems were translated into English.

H. KURDIAN

★ ★ ★

ANDASTAN, a periodical devoted to arts and literature, published by P. Topalian. 80, illustrated, paper bound, pp. 144. Price for each issue 500 French francs. A quarterly. Paris, 1953.

This is an Armenian periodical of abroad which is devoted to art and literature. Edited with great care and printed on fine paper with exquisite artistic technique, this is the third number of ANDASTAN which reaches the subscriber. Mr. P. Topalian is very meticulous in the selection of his material. No doubt it was his insatiable love for Armenian art and letters which drove the poet-painter-artist Topalian to this ambitious and costly venture. The current issue of ANDASTAN is a rich compendium of poems, short stories, essays, memoirs and general articles on Armenian music, history, language and miniatures from the pens of contemporary Armenian writers, supplemented by critical book reviews.

We hope that this commendable periodical will not become a financial burden on its editor-publisher, and that there will be a sufficient number of Armenian patrons in the United States who will support the venture with their subscriptions for themselves, their friends, and their gift subscriptions to educational institutions of America and the Middle East.

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